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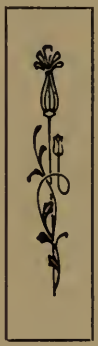

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MR. PODD

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I

HENRY P. WADDICK, the retail grocer, of Grape City, Wisconsin, was a Conservative. When you come to think of it, nearly all retail grocers are conservative. They aren't even reactionary.

A Reactionary is a man who regards all political changes since 1850 as being prejudicial to his interest, and therefore to the interest of the country.

Mr. Waddick frequently viewed with alarm, and almost daily stood aghast. His favorite attitude toward events was expressed in the words, which regularly came from his mouth: "Why, I can remember the time—"

Henry P. Waddick could remember the time when there was no fol-de-rol. He could remember the time when a man did a day's work for a day's pay. He could remember the time when a man's word was as good as his bond. He could remember when everything people bought was cheap, and everything they sold yielded a decent profit. Or he thought he could. When people paid their bills. When there was no income tax. When people obeyed the law. When there was prosperity in the land. Before labor-unions. Before foreigners came. Before freaks came along with their uplift notions, and demoralized the common people.

And now look at the country! Mr. Waddick asked every one to look at the country. "Gone to the devil, sir; gone to the devil! And who is responsible? Freaks, sir, freaks; rich freaks like that jackass Podd! Rich freaks, with so much money that they have nothing better to do than talk treason to a lot of half-baked foreigners and numbskulls. Parlor socialists!"

Mr. Waddick was born in 1871, which year, curiously enough, was the very year the country began to go down-hill. He was a busy little man; the busiest little man in Grape City, in Wisconsin, probably the busiest little man in the world. You couldn't help getting the idea, when you saw how busy Waddick was, that as a baby, in his mother's lap, he was just as busy: that he was born busy, and would die in rapid motion.

Henry P. Waddick was only five feet five inches in height, and weighed, at the top of his growth, less than a hundred and twenty pounds. But he whizzed through life, as only a small man can whizz without becoming a wreck. He had whizzed all his hair from his head, except a thin fringe which reached from ear to ear. He had whizzed his eyes till they popped slightly, and watered easily, and the whizzing had reddened his eye-lids. His speed had been so great that the long, sandy mustache he cultivated curled backward against his thin cheeks. He wore a number twelve collar. But he had a number sixteen capacity for hats.

The Grape City grocer had a large and well-nourished collection of pet hates. These hates, so far as one could see, kept him in prime physical condition, as setting-up exercises do for some other men. When Mr. Waddick wasn't whizzing inside his store, or

whizzing outside at his business, or whizzing home to dinner and back again, he was exercising his pet hates.

In general, the grocer's hates were all conservative hates. In particular he hated labor unions, socialists, Democrats, progressives, liberals, agitators, free-thinkers, uplifters of any description. But most particularly he hated William Podd. He had never seen Podd. But the more he heard about Podd, the more he was convinced that Podd was at the root of all evil. Podd was at the bottom of the mischief. Podd, the jackass, ought to be in a straight-jacket. Or in jail. Preferably in jail where straight-jackets were worn. Podd was leading half-baked workmen astray. He was sowing the seeds of revolution.

Mr. Waddick achieved a manner of uttering the word "Podd" which was awful to the hearer. It was not a hiss. You can't hiss the word Podd. But it was like what a hiss does for words which can be hissed. It was like an imprecation, an anathema, and a funereal groan all in one.

"I only hope the day will come," said Mr. Waddick, "when I can meet that man Podd face to face and tell him what I think of him."

If a debtor of Mr. Waddick moved away during the silent night, leaving an unpaid bill for $79.23, Mr. Podd was at the bottom of it. Podd had told the working people they could do just as they pleased. If the freighthandlers smashed a case of mixed-pickles, it was Podd's doing. Podd had demoralized the working man. If a chain-store appeared, in competition with the Waddick emporium, Podd had encouraged it. It would fail; the store would go broke as sure as little green apples were heaven-sent; and they could blame

Podd. Podd's ideas about co-operation! Pshaw! Podd's mouthings about brotherhood! Faugh!

Mr. Waddick having arrived at this almost uncontrollable hatred for Podd, began to deliver Podd to his customers, along with the groceries. He wrapped Podd with the soap, he put Podd into the bags with the sugar, and he stuck Podd on the labels of the tinned goods. The customers began to get very tired of Podd, as they had long since become very tired of Waddick. But they continued to trade with Mr. Waddick, and the reason was this:

Waddick was reliable. Waddick was a born retail grocer. You might have to pay Waddick a little more, but when Waddick said he could deliver, he delivered. And the little whizzing retail grocer kept everything in stock which anyone could dream of. It was his boast that no city shop could brag of a greater variety. And the Waddick store was a model of cleanliness. It simmered down to this: you simply had to trade at Waddick's. So Waddick made money.

As to family, Mr. Waddick was also conservative. He had a wife, but no children. Still, without knowing all the circumstances, it is unreasonable to attribute this solely to conservatism on Mr. Waddick's part.

Mrs. Waddick, however, was seldom seen, and never heard. On Saturday nights she sometimes helped wait on customers at the store. People looked sympathetically at her retreating countenance, and heard her timid, hesitating voice, and said to each other, "It's a shame that woman is so kept down." But nobody ever heard from Mrs. Waddick that she was kept down Mr. Waddick said that his wife was the only woman, except his mother, who knew her sphere. So it may

be guessed that Mrs. Waddick was, if not a conservative by nature, at least a conservative by persuasion.

On the morning after Mr. Podd gave an interview to a representative of the Associated Press, Henry P. Waddick, seated at his little desk in the rear of the store, before the doors were opened for business, was reading the newspaper. Suddenly Mr. Waddick snorted and uttered that word "Podd" in a most awful way than he had ever done before. The boy-of-all-work, who was sweeping near the proprietor, dropped his broom. Mr. Waddick looked around, his sandy mustache whizzing against his cheeks. The clerks had not arrived. So he had to talk to Joe, the boy.

"He's a jackass! I've always said so! Now he's proved it, himself!" cried Waddick.

"Yes, sir," said the boy.

"I hope to heavens the ship sinks!" bawled Mr. Waddick.

"Yes, sir," responded the boy, brightly.

"A parcel of idiots as big as himself! A disgrace to the country! They'll make us the laughing-stock of the world!"

"Yes, sir," agreed the boy.

"Do you know what that jackass Podd is going to do, now, Joe?" asked Mr. Waddick.

"No, sir."

"It's there!" Mr. Waddick hammered his fist on the fresh newspaper. "He can't make enough trouble for his own people, so he's going 'round the world to stir up rebellion. Going to buy a ship and take a lot of nincompoops with him to preach the gospel of—of—sedition. Anarchy! Nobody knows what! Podd!

The more Henry P. Waddick dwelled on the latest

revelation about Podd, the more excited he became. He could think of nothing else, talks of nothing else, that morning. He sallied forth into the street and button-holed people, and pointed out the newspaper story. "Now, have I been right or not about that millionaire lunatic?" he demanded. All those people who had ever had an argument with Mr. Waddick, hastily said that the grocer was right, and beat a hasty retreat.

By noon it dawned upon Mr. Waddick himself that he couldn't go on this way. A man cannot whizz continuously in one direction without endangering his faculties. Mr. Waddick sought a safety valve for his indignation, and found it in a letter. He wrote a letter to Podd. He had often felt like writing a letter to Podd before, but something held him back. Now, it had to be done.

Mr. Waddick wrote a large flowing hand. He sat down at his desk and composed this:

GRAPE CITY, WISCONSIN,
September 17.

MR. WILLIAM PODD,
Poddsville.

SIR: For several years I have believed you to be a malicious and dangerous jackass. I am now convinced of it. You are a menace to our institutions. I brand you as such. I am no anonymous letter writer. The undersigned will meet you at any time and place, and publicly repeat what I say here; that you are a jackass.

(Signed) HENRY P. WADDICK.

Having posted this letter, Mr. Waddick felt much improved. He felt that he had done all he could. He

opened two bottles of grape-juice and treated all his employees.

Mr. Waddick did not expect a reply. He did not want a reply, except in so far as he would thereby know that William Podd had personally read the letter. As a matter of sober reflection, he realized that Mr. Podd was not likely to open his mail, even when it was marked PERSONAL (and Mr. Waddick had so marked his letter) so that the chances of the millionaire ever seeing it were slim.

So Henry Waddick's eyes popped more than ever and his lean hands trembled, as he picked a letter from the morning mail, several days afterward, which bore the printed legend on the corner: "Podd Manufacturing Company, Executive Offices." Mr. Waddick slit the envelope and read hungrily:

DEAR SIR OR MADAM:

Mr. Podd wishes to acknowledge with gratitude your splendid co-operation in his plan for a world-wide commonwealth. Your letter, asking to become a member of the pilgrim party, will be carefully read and weighed, and you will be later notified of any decision. It will be of great service to us if you will make no further communication until you hear from us. You will realize that the number of letters we are receiving, in regard to the pilgrimage, is very great. With Mr. Podd's personal regards and best wishes,

Yours very truly,

A. G. NEALE, per B. M.

Mr. Waddick gave forth a piercing yell, and sat back weakly in his chair. Then he flew at the letter again. Then he glared at it limply. Finally he realized that he held in his hands what is known as a "form"

letter, cleverly printed to imitate typewriting, and used by business concerns who wish to convey the intimate tone of a personal communication without the great expense of typing each letter. Mr. Waddick had received Form A.

It was some minutes before the trembling of the indignant Waddick's hands subsided enough so that he could reply to the letter. Finally he wrote, weighing every word carefully:

MR. WILLIAM PODD (Personal)
Poddsville.

SIR: I have received your insulting letter in reply to mine of the seventeenth inst. Your claim that I have asked to become a member of your idiotic excursion is a deliberate and unqualified falsehood, and I brand it as such and defy you to sue me in the courts. I have not co-operated with you, and you know it. In my last letter, of which I enclose a copy, I said you were a jackass. I repeat it, with as much detestation as I am capable of.

(Signed) HENRY P. WADDICK.

Having underscored the word "jackass" five times, and having written on the envelope the fervent desire "to be opened by Mr. Podd only," Mr. Waddick went back to the retail grocery trade with as much interest as he could muster. A fortnight passed before the little grocer heard from the Podd Organization again. But, all the time, he had a feeling that the affair was not at an end. It was not. One day, early in November, this letter came:

DEAR SIR OR MADAM:

Mr. Podd is deeply touched at your expressions of interest in his pilgrimage. Indeed, nothing would gratify him more

than to have every one of the noble souls who have asked permission to accompany him on his world tour, join his little band. Of course you understand that this is impossible. Your letter, stating why you believe you are fitted to be one of the brotherhood pilgrims, is being carefully considered. In the meantime, until you hear from us, may we respectfully ask you not to write further in the matter. With Mr. Podd's kindest regards, and again thanking you for your earnest wishes,

Yours very truly,

(Signed but not read) A. G. NEALE, per B. M.

Had Mr. Waddick been the apoplectic type of man, who sits a long time at the dinner-table, he could not have survived the liveliness of his emotions when he read the message from Podd. But he was lean and elastic. And, besides, a grocer has a good many safety valves, wherewith to work off superfluous power. Mr. Waddick whizzed from his chair, seized a carton of sample lamp chimneys from the top of his desk, hurled them to the floor and jumped on them with the cry of a wounded animal. Two of his employees, hearing the cry, rushed to the back of the store, feeling sure that the thing they had always feared had arrived. But Mr. Waddick was still alive, and comparatively healthy. He was seated at his desk again, perspiring and carmine, gazing helplessly at a crumpled sheet of paper.

Mr. Waddick had received Form B.

Mr. Waddick was enough familiar with the routine of large businesses to realize what was happening to him. He knew that he was in the merciless clutches of the efficiency department of the Podd Manufacturing Company. He knew that every son of Adam and every daughter of Eve who had written Mr. Podd about the proposed pilgrimage, had received Form A.

He knew that all those who wrote a second time had received Form B. He realized, with a sinking sensation, that those who wrote a third time would receive Form C.; and that Forms D, E, and F were probably all printed and stacked in thousands, ready to go on their journeys. He knew that he, Mr. Waddick, had touched the button which caused the marvelous efficiency department of Podd to function in his direction, and that regardless of all human effort, it would go on functioning till Podd stopped the machinery. Even if he should die that moment, Mr. Waddick knew, his widow would continue to receive the messages.

Mr. Waddick was a man who would not needlessly thrust his head against a stone-wall; yet he hated to give up. It was impossible to reason with an efficiency department which had assumed, as a working hypothesis, that every letter which came to Podd, concerning the pilgrimage, was a request for a berth on the ship. An efficiency department can take no account of singularity. It deals with bulk. Yet, Mr. Waddick had to reply. He chewed the end of his pen a long time and finally wrote, despairingly:

To Podd and all those connected with him:

I scorn your silly and offensive efforts to make me ridiculous. I deny that I asked to join your suicidal and unpatriotic troupe of anarchist minstrels. I said you were a jackass. You are.

(Signed) Henry P. Waddick.

The reply reached Mr. Waddick on the evening of the twelfth of November. This time he opened the letter with cold, unemotional hate. He read:

DEAR SIR OR MADAM:

We regret to inform you that Mr. Podd has already selected the eight pilgrims, who will accompany him on his mission, and that for reasons which do not reflect in the slightest on your noble impulses or your value to the plan, we cannot invite you to join this party. You may have a later opportunity. It is Mr. Podd's intention to have the names of all those who will work for the cause at home, while he is away, emblazoned on a scroll for posterity. Your name will be one of those whose ideals, whose heart, joined with that of Mr. Podd, in this crisis of our world.

Yours for the cause,

A. G. NEALE, per B. M.

Having chokingly noted the contents of Form C, Mr. Waddick seized a railway time-table from a desk drawer and studied it carefully, making notes on a blotter meanwhile. Then he went straight home and packed a small valise.

"I'm going to Poddsville on the midnight train," said the grocer to his wife. "Everything is all right at the store. You might look in now and then, and if the *Courier* wants next week's advertisement, it's in the right hand top pigeonhole of my desk. Tell Simonson to mark down common crackers to eighteen cents, and start the sale on vanilla extract Saturday morning."

"Is it sudden—this call?" asked Mrs. Waddick.

Mr. Waddick faced his wife, the wife who knew her sphere, and said collectively and precisely, "Annie, it's a fool trip, but I've got to go. That jackass Podd is not going to leave this country until I tell him my opinion of him. I—I can't think straight till I get that off my mind. It's been worrying me. You'll say I'm crazy. But you don't know what I feel—"

Mrs. Waddick smiled encouragingly. "I should go

by all means, Henry," she said. "You haven't been quite yourself lately—since you wrote that first letter to Podd. I know just how you feel. Have you plenty of money with you in case—"

"In case of what?"

"In case it should cost something to tell Mr. Podd what you think of him?"

"I've thought of that. Yes, I've got plenty. Annie, you're a jewel. Good-bye." Mr. Waddick amazed his wife by kissing her full on the lips, and adding a hug for good measure.

But, when Mr. Waddick arrived at Poddsville, and at the Podd plant, he found that William Podd had already gone to New York.

Henry Waddick counted his money. Then he went back to the Poddsville railway station as fast as he could get there. There was a train for New York which would arrive at the Pennsylvania station, New York City, at 11:20 on the morning of the fourteenth. The Podd ship was to sail at noon sharp. Mr. Waddick gulped and bought a ticket.

At Enochsburg, the train was on time. At Sweet Falls the train was on time. At Alexandria the train was on time. But at Pike Junction the engine blew out a cylinder-head. Mr. Waddick, watch in hand, and with an unlighted cigar half chewed, sought the conductor and denounced the railroad.

At ten thirty that night, the train, seventy minutes late, was on its way again. Mr. Waddick had the smoking compartment of the Pullman all to himself. The last remaining traveler had staggered forth from the company of the retail grocer with a verbal shower of Podd dripping from his clothing. At twelve Mr.

Waddick climbed into his berth in the sleeping car, but not to sleep. He alternately gazed into the radium face of his watch and watched the lights of little farmhouses flicker by, or saw the bigger lights of the cities flare into the lower berth as the wheels pounded over the grade-crossings.

When the train gained a minute, Mr. Waddick was hopeful. It slowed down for a cross-over, Mr. Waddick went into a decline.

The train was exactly ten minutes late at New York City. It was half past eleven. Mr. Waddick knew from the newspapers that the Podd ship would steam from Pier 21, North River. He scrambled over men, women and children, in search of a taxicab. He flung himself into it and shouted to the driver:

"Pier 21, North River,—the Podd ship—and go like—"

And the driver went like that. At one short turn, Mr. Waddick slid from his seat to the bottom of the taxi, and got his foot caught in a strap that hung on the door, while his valise rested snugly on the back of his neck.

II

THE fact was, Mr. Podd was going around the world in response to a call.

He had heard this call several times during the past five years of his life. It was a call which grew louder at each repetition. It was a call which said, in clear, metallic tones: "William Podd, arise and help your fellow men!"

William Podd had half-risen on several occasions, with the best will in the world; but after an insufficient gesture, had slipped back into his chair again.

At the age of fifty-two, a widower with one daughter, vastly wealthy and successful as the world's greatest manufacturer of nozzles, a spare man of medium height, with long, lean face, a black mustache made up of as few hairs as can be rightly called a complete mustache, nervous as a squirrel in business activity, prudent of diet, with blue-grayish eyes as difficult of assay as the rest of his elusive being—at the age of fifty-two, possessed of millions that he could never spend, and without the training to enjoy leisure, William Podd had awakened to the realization of a truth which depressed him greatly.

Briefly stated, the truth was that having created the best possible nozzles for the world, it was necessary for him to make the world a better place for his nozzles. Secure in the possession not only of wealth, but of an organization which frictionlessly accumulated

more and still more wealth, he was at last able to lift his eyes from his work and look about him at the world outside the Podd plants. What he saw saddened him.

William Podd had organized his business and made it pre-eminent in its line, through efficiency; eliminating every waste motion and duplicated effort. He looked at the world and saw that it was incredibly wasteful, slovenly and ill-managed.

He looked at government, and found it cumbersome, leaky, and infested with parasitic growths.

He looked at the politics of his country, and pronounced it abysmal in greed, stupidity and inefficiency.

Being primarily an inventor and fabricator of nozzles, William Podd was an amateur in political matters. His first thought was that it was necessary to evict the party in power, and elect the other party. So, he ceased to be a Republican, and became a Democrat. Then Mr. Podd made the discovery that just as the grocer takes strictly-fresh-eggs, best-eggs, new-gathered eggs, and good-eggs out of the same basket, so with the established political parties. The names were different; but they came out of the same basket.

Mr. Podd became a Progressive.

When William Podd became a Progressive, he understood that Progressives were people who wanted to progress. It pained him when he discovered that Progressive political leaders are "irregulars" who want the places occupied by "regulars," and having obtained them, immediately become "regulars" themselves, and greatly frown upon any further irregularity.

Mr. Podd became a Radical.

Radicals are people who are dissatisfied with the existing condition of affairs, and want something very

much different. Usually they are people who have less of the world's goods than they think they ought to have. Most people have less of the world's goods than they think they ought to have. But most people are not radicals for the same reason that most people are not gamblers. There are too many blanks in the lottery. Also, most people hesitate at radical programs which pretend to distribute wealth evenly, because they know so few persons besides themselves who really deserve it.

There is another class of people who become Radicals. They are not so numerous. They are people who have such a large supply of the world's goods that, under any circumstances, they cannot imagine not having enough left.

Mr. Podd became a Radical. Rather, he became a Patron of Radicals. A Patron of Radicals is a man who cannot spend much of his time at the actual business of being a radical, and has other reasons for not being much in the company of the rank and file of Radicals. So he becomes a sort of Angel for the Radicals. He is their fiscal agent.

Mr. Podd became a Patron of Radicals, and financed a great many movements that were supposed to tend toward the New Order. He was the founder and donor of the School of New Political Thought, in Chicago, Illinois.

But, as the New Order showed signs of being slow in approaching, and as Mr. Podd was in great earnest, the manufacturer of nozzles began to speculate along his own lines. He began to read and to digest, as well as he could, books on Socialism, Communism, Syndicalism, and Anarchy.

Mr. Podd liked none of these things in the whole, and all of them in part. Viewing these doctrines in the light of a successful manufacturer of the world's best nozzles, Mr. Podd saw many defects in all these systems of proposed government. His mind undertook to consolidate the virtues of them. Just as he was grappling with an ideal government of his own, the Great War began.

The War shocked Mr. Podd inexpressibly.

Mr. Podd hated the very idea of shedding man's blood. Violence was abhorrent to his very soul. Also, war was waste, on a colossal scale. It was the quintessence of unproduction. Further, it multiplied, as rapidly as bacteria multiply in milk, all the abuses of the governments engaged. It multiplied greed, it multiplied the chances for dishonesty, it multiplied parasites.

The nozzle business shared with all other manufacturing interests the profits of the war boom. Mr. Podd hated those profits, but he could not avoid them. Nozzles were needed. The Podd plants worked night and day to win the war with nozzles. Ironically, Mr. Podd helped to win the war.

But Mr. Podd did not want to win the war. He did not want to win any war. He wanted war to be impossible.

After the war Mr. Podd wrote a book. It was called "A Proposal for a World-Wide Commonwealth, with Some Suggestions as to the Possibility of Establishing a Brotherhood of the Nations."

As the regular publishers did not think the book would have a very large sale, Mr. Podd published it at the expense of the author.

The regular publishers were right. It did not have

a very large sale. It did not have any sale at all. Mr. Podd gave away fourteen thousand copies, to the factory and office forces, and had thirty-six thousand copies left. He called in the sales manager of the Podd Nozzle Company, and urged him to devise a means of giving away the book where it would do the most good. The sales manager, a man of infinite resource in selling nozzles, had never had experience in giving anything away. But he said, "I will try, Mr. Podd."

The sales manager, having ineffectually tried to give a few copies to his own friends, reported to Mr. Podd that in his opinion, the book could not be given away. As this coincided with Mr. Podd's own experience, the thirty-six thousand copies were still lying, boxed, somewhere in the stock rooms of the plant.

An author whose books do not sell feels the public rebuff bitterly. But it is even worse when an author finds that he cannot give his books away. It would seem impossible that a book could not be given away. Even old telephone directories have been stolen. Copies of the Congressional Record have been removed from public libraries.

The sales manager of the Podd Nozzle Company, when he admitted that he could not give Mr. Podd's book away, remarked that the title, he thought, was against the book. He said he was sure that, had the book been bound in red, and called, simply, "Dripping Blood," it could have been given away.

Mr. Podd was hurt, but he was undaunted. He was a man who had never failed to create a good nozzle for any purpose. He bided his time, feeling sure that some day he would be able to give his book away.

Mr. Podd had thought of Publicity. He well knew, as a manufacturer, what possibilities lay in publicity.

Direct advertising of his book had not brought results. But there are many kinds of publicity. At odd times Mr. Podd's mind strayed from nozzles, even at his desk, and rambled through the maze of conjectures which naturally come to a man who wants to halt and converse with a public which shows no desire to halt and listen.

But the idea came at last. It came, like many other great ideas, not piece-meal, but full-grown and developed, as though a good fairy, working while Podd slept, had presented it to his waking eyes, saying, "Here is your path, Podd. Arise and tread it."

The book must be advertised by Podd himself. Podd should advertise Podd's International Commonwealth, and the Brotherhood of the Nations. Podd must be a pilgrim; and a few other suitable pilgrims, faring forth with Podd should also advertise the book. Wherever the pilgrim ship touched, on the journey around the world, the book would be distributed. Not only that; there would be meetings, at which Podd and his fellow pilgrims would speak.

An unknown man might do this thing without extracting much publicity from the Press. But William Podd was not an unknown man. He was a public figure. His wealth, combined with his radicalism, would make the venture news, first page news. He knew that.

Having set the plan in motion by giving the necessary orders to his confidential secretary, William Podd soon afterwards went home to tell his daughter.

On the way home Mr. Podd saw nothing, heard

nothing. The busy manufacturing town of Poddsville hummed around him, but he had no ears for the sound. The traffic of goods and humans was brisk in the streets, but Podd had no eyes for it. He saw only his ship, his pilgrims, and his plan. He was surprised when the chauffeur opened the door of his modest coupé, and said, "We're here, sir." It was only as Podd walked up the winding path, hedged with brave Autumn blooms, and up the steps of his house, that his heart beat faster with a sudden rush of misgivings.

With his secretary, Podd had been authoritative. But Neale was only his secretary. The young lady he was about to face now was his daughter, Willa Podd.

III

Podd called his daughter Will, and she called him Bill.

The habit dated back to the time when Willa Podd was twelve years old. She was then already motherless. Already she had achieved that peculiar poise which motherless children have. She basked in the possession of the finest frocks; she had not entirely given up her dolls; but there was already a light in her eyes which said that she knew she was an individual, and she demanded respect, even from Podd.

One night, coming late from his office, and tired (for he had not yet got his first million, then), Podd had caught his daughter up in his arms, kissed her, and called her "Will."

This was too familiar for the young lady. She pouted with a fine show of mock offense and replied, "If you call me Will, I'll call you 'Bill'."

"I want you to call me Bill," replied Podd, and hugged her to him so closely that his beard stubble left a prairie fire on one of her silken cheeks. Long afterwards she recalled that when her father put her down, her cheek was not only hot, but wet: and the tears, she knew, were not her own.

So he continued to call her Will, and she continued to call him Bill, and perhaps even now she doesn't know that, before she was born, the name William was already prepared for her, and had to be hastily changed

to Willa because she turned out to be another kind of baby.

"Will," said Mr. Podd, as he stretched himself out in the chaise longue after dinner, "I've got some news for you."

"Yes?" was the distrait reply. Willa was reading the evening newspaper.

Mr. Podd waited a moment and continued: "Listen, Will. We're going for a cruise around the world."

"You don't mean it, Bill!" cried Podd's daughter. "Oh, that's splendid. How did you ever make up your mind to do it?" Willa rose and ran to her father and seized both his hands. "When do we start? Tell me all about it! All the way 'round the world? Will it be cherry blossom time in Japan when we get there? Of course we'll go up into Thibet, won't we? And Buenos Aires! And Rio de Janeiro! And the Taj Mahal. And Paris. And the Rhine.—Oh, Bill, how did you ever work yourself up to it? Tell me, quick!"

"I've been thinking about it for a long time," replied Podd, vastly pleased with this reception of his scheme, so far as he had disclosed it.

"And Canterbury Cathedral, and Stratford-on-Avon, and the falls of the Iguazú, if that's the way they pronounce it," rattled Willa. "And donkey-back across the Andes at that place where they have to cross on the highest point, and Popocatapetl! And the fjords! Oh, I never thought you could get away from that ghastly office, even to go to Kansas City, except on business. When do we start? Let's go tomorrow. I'm all ready. Just you and I together, Bill—nobody else—and we'll rough it like a couple of real pals, won't

we? None of this Cook—tour—megaphone—thing for us!"

Mr. Podd swallowed quickly. "I—I did think of having a few people along, Will," he said, weakly. "You see—at least—Neale—"

"Neale!" cried Miss Podd. "Oh, heavens, Bill, you wouldn't take *him* with us, would you?"

"Why not?" asked Podd, faintly. "Besides, I haven't told you—"

"Oh, don't tell me this is a business trip," pleaded the young woman. "You're not going to take along samples of nozzles, Bill? I've lived with nozzles all my life, but I really couldn't go around the world with them."

"Oh, no," responded Podd, eagerly. "It's not that kind of a trip. Our foreign business is as big as the foreigners can pay for, just now. The fact is, Will, if you'll listen a minute—it's much bigger than all that. It's about my book. Not only about my book, but about the ideas I tried to make clear in my book."

"Oh, the poor book!" said Miss Podd, with genuine feeling—not for the international commonwealth, but for the disappointment she knew her father had suffered. "It was rotten of people not to read it. But, look, Bill, if they wouldn't read it here, you can't expect them to read it in Brazil, or somewhere, can you?"

Mr. Podd girded himself for the great disclosure. "The fact is," he began, "I've thought of a way to get my ideas before the world. Now, you won't interrupt me, will you? That's a good pal."

"I'm sorry, dear," she said, "I want to hear. Tell me."

Podd proceeded. "You know I feel this is my life work," he said. "The world can't go on much longer the way it is going—"

"That's what old Ecclesiastes said—Oh, I'm sorry! I won't say another word. Please forgive me."

"You can't know how bad things are," continued Podd, patting the hand that was lying in one of his. "Distrust, greed, brutality, jealousy, suspicion, everything. Some people preying on more people, and those preying on others; some people without food and clothing, and others fattening like hogs on the labor of the many; dishonesty and corruption everywhere, and the church can't or won't help, and the politicians don't want things different—and there's got to be a new deal. There's got to be a new order!" Mr. Podd's eyes glistened with the fervor of a believer. "I can't set things right alone, but I can help. A thousand like me can't do it, but we can begin. There's got to be a government in every country, as Lincoln said, by the people, of the people and for them. People have got to work in common for the common good. The old ideas about property have got to go. I'm one of the beneficiaries of the vicious system, and I've got to go. Nobody has any right to a million dollars. It's wrong.

"You know what I think about these things, Will. Well, I want to get them before the world. I want a few chosen pilgrims—I call them pilgrims—who will help me. I'm going to buy a ship, or charter a ship—what were you going to say?" He had seen her lips open.

"I wasn't going to interrupt. But I'll say now, Bill, I like that idea. That's adventure. There's something big about going on your own ship. I'm listening."

"I'm going to take you with me. I've got to take Neale. I plan to take eight other people—just eight—who are boosters for the New Order—who believe in the vital issues I believe in—who will study with me, and work with me, and preach these things in every port in the world where people speak and understand English. And, of course, we'll use my book as propaganda. People who wouldn't read it before will read it when it's advertised this way. I know it."

It was quite obvious that Miss Podd's interest in the voyage round the world was less keen than it had been. But she was a pal. She put away the notion of enjoyment, and threw herself into the mechanics of the scheme.

"How are you going to pick the eight people?" she asked, in a business-like way.

"They are going to select themselves. That sounds funny, doesn't it? But I've figured it all out. When I give this idea out to the newspapers, I'm going to say that I'll be glad to receive letters from any adult man or woman, of any age, color or condition, in the United States, telling me why they think they are fitted to be a pilgrim on my ship. From these letters, the eight will be chosen. Don't you see the advantage of it, Will? When you talk with people, they can use their personality to influence you. But when they've got to set down their ideas in cold ink, they've got to make good. If they called to see me, they might have a cast in the eye, or a wart on the nose, which would give me a slant against them—because we're none of us free from the bias of those impressions. But when they write to me, I'm dealing only with their intelligences, and with their souls. You know I select all the executives for

my plants by letter. I hire them before I ever see them. I don't want to see even their photographs. I want to see what they have to say. It makes no difference whether they can spell correctly. Phrases don't count. They've got to tell their story."

It was Willa's part, as a pal, to offer reasonable objections. She had always done so, when Podd talked business with her. He liked it. It cleared his own conceptions.

"You couldn't read all the letters, Bill. There'd be thousands and thousands."

"No, I couldn't. But I've got an efficiency department to do the weeding. They'd select the five hundred best, and give them to Neale. He'd select the hundred best, and give them to me. There's no difficulty there. From a hundred, I select the eight. I pay all their expenses, of course. They may be rich, or they may be poor; it makes no difference. I make only one stipulation about their persons. They must be in good health, of course."

Willa Podd was silent. She rose from the place where she had been sitting, at her father's feet, and went to a table whereon lay a tennis racquet. She seized the racquet and performed a few robust swings with it. Podd watched her narrowly, for he knew she was grappling with the scheme. It was her way of concentrating. Her lithe, athletic body swayed and she served imaginary balls across the net. Never before had William Podd so realized the graceful beauty of this daughter of his; the fine set of her head, the glorious bronze hair, the fine strong brown arms, hardly begun to bleach from the last summer's seashore tan, the sturdy downright stance—an athlete with a beau-

tiful face like her mother's, and her mother's simple strength of character in her mouth and eyes. Podd felt that he was a rich man, regardless of nozzles.

"Bill," said the girl, laying down the racquet, "It's not a bad stunt."

"You see it, Will!"

She nodded. "Maybe it's better than going all on our own, you and I. I want to be unselfish, too. I want to help people. You're a fine sort, dad." In latter years, when she felt particularly affectionate, she had called him "dad" instead of "Bill." "I wish I were as good as you."

"Nonsense," said Podd. But he tingled with pleasure.

"Even if I didn't want to go, I'd go to look after you," said Willa. "But I want to go. I do, really. It's a big idea. It's fine. It's education. But—don't take Neale."

"Oh, I must have Neale along, Will. Why don't you want me to take Neale? You don't dislike Neale, do you? You never said so."

"Dislike Neale? No. But Neale—oh, Bill, let's forget Neale."

"But I can't forget Neale, Will. Neale is my confidential man. I depend on him for—for a thousand things. He knows all my affairs. He's simply invaluable. I didn't realize you—felt that way about Neale. What's the reason, dear? We haven't any secrets from each other, have we? Tell Bill."

"There really isn't anything important to tell, dad. It's nothing, I know. Only—well, I will tell you. Neale wants to marry me. Not only that, but he feels that he's going to."

"You don't mean it! Why—Good Lord, you're

joking, Will. It can't be. Neale? When did he tell you this?"

"He never said a word to me about it. But I know it."

"Oh, I'm sure you're mistaken. Who told you—?"

"Nobody. Nobody has ever said a word about it. But I know it. I feel it. I've seen it in Neale's eyes."

Podd leaned back, relieved. "Oh, I'm sure you're wrong. I know Neale. Why, Neale wouldn't think—he wouldn't—"

"Now look here, Bill," said Miss Podd, with a touch of maternal severity. "There are some things you know, and some you can't know. There are a lot of things I don't know, but I know something about this subject. Do you happen to know how many times I've been proposed to, in this past year?"

"Good Lord, no," said Podd, hoarsely. "I didn't know—"

"No, because I don't bother you with such things. Including four proposals by mail, including one from a Bohemian count and one from a Lithuanian duke, I've had twenty-two, one for every year of my age. Some of them were not a bad lot, either. Two of them I liked pretty well, but not quite well enough. Bill, their reasons why I should marry them were very funny. There was a chap from Salem, Massachusetts, who felt that I should marry him because his folks came over in the Mayflower. There was a nice boy from Rochester, New York, who confessed that his father didn't know what sort of business he was fitted for, and suggested that he had better propose to me, before he tried anything else. One man told me that it would be worth while for me to be known as the wife of the best amateur billiard player in the Eastern States.

There was one of them, out of the lot, who didn't have any definite reason why I should marry him. I think perhaps he felt restless, and wanted to be doing something. The rest had great arguments."

"Great arguments!" growled Podd, with a petulance quite unlike him.

"Well, I mean they thought they were great arguments. I listened to them all very considerately, I think. I couldn't help wondering why they didn't lay more stress on what the fiction magazines call 'the love element.' Oh, of course they did mention love, but they spoke of it in an off-hand way, as though they didn't want to drag in any irrelevant matters."

Miss Podd looked at the cold fireplace a little wistfully.

"You know, Bill," she went on, "I rather miss that love element. It—it hurts a little, somehow, to be treated as a 'proposition', as you say down at the office. I suppose if I were one of your stenographers, I'd hear more about love. Now, there was one boy—he wasn't as old as I—who almost said something about love; I feel sure of it. But I looked at him too quickly, I think, and he turned red and began to mumble something about the good we could do to people, if we pooled my money and his brains—and so that was another dud. Oh, dear!"

"But what about Neale?" asked Podd, anxiously. The whole conversation was most disturbing to a man with only one daughter, and that daughter his only real companion in the world.

"Oh, Neale. Well, Neale wasn't one of the twenty-two matrimonial salesmen. Neale hasn't said a word. But I know the facial symptoms, and I know that Neale

has been building up an argument why I should marry him."

"Well, I'd like to know what it is," gurgled Podd, rather sullenly.

"I'm going to tell you. Neale is your confidential secretary. Although that sounds like a subordinate position, he's really, in a sense, next in command, in the Podd Company, to you, isn't he?"

"I suppose you might say so. Yes."

"Well, he knows it. There's no job you can promote Neale to, in the organization. But every man wants promotion. So Neale feels that his next step up is to marry me. Yes, he does! I know it. Neale feels that I ought to marry him, for the good of the Podd Company. I don't say he's a self-seeking or conniving person. He's absolutely honest. That's the trouble. If he weren't so loyal to the organization, he wouldn't have such a good argument, and I wouldn't be afraid of him."

"Well, I'll tell Neale—"

"Don't be absurd! Of course you won't say a word. You've no right to. Neale hasn't said a word. Do you want to make me ridiculous?"

"But even if you were fond of Neale I—I couldn't allow such a thing, Will," gasped Podd. "He wouldn't be any good as a confidential secretary any more."

Podd does not know yet why Willa suddenly shrieked with laughter, and swept over to him and hugged him till he begged for mercy.

"Oh, Bill!" breathed the young woman, as she nuzzled her father, "You dear!"

When the zephyr had abated, Podd asked, "You won't prevent him from coming, will you, Will? I

—I'm lost without Neale. If he gets—indiscreet—you'll squash him like a bug, I know. Say he can come, Will. Will you?"

"It will hurt him when I squash him," said the young woman. "But—oh, well, I don't mind. Besides, you've already told him he could come, haven't you?"

"Well, I did say—"

"It's all right, Bill. Which will you have now, your pipe or a cigar?"

"I'll have a real old-fashioned kiss, Will," said Podd.

And he got it.

IV

MR. PODD'S ship, *The Future*, 1982 net tons, Swedish built and of Swedish registry, lay alongside the South side of Pier 21, North River, with her blue peter hanging limp, or barely fluttering at an infrequent puff of breeze. *The Future* had an unusual November day to begin her unusual voyage. It was a real Indian summer. A few lazy hides of fleece drifted amiably along the Western horizon, just above the smudge of the Jersey sky-line; otherwise all was steely blue overhead.

The Future was not much to look at; but by the same token, she was not bad to look at. Her lines were those of a complacent Swedish housewife, who despite her ampleness is ready and willing to put through a large and long day's work. That she was not built for speed was evident; that she was seaworthy and reliable no observer could know, but any observer would feel sure. She looked clean, with that well-scrubbed cleanness which comes chiefly from never having been allowed to get dirty. The ship brokers had promised that she could do her eleven knots, and Mr. Podd was satisfied. He preferred it so. He was not in a hurry. He foresaw that eight pilgrims, with plenty of time to exchange ideas for the improvement of the world, would arrive at a sounder program than eight pilgrims being whisked across the ocean in a sumptuous modern mail-packet, constantly lured from their solemn pur-

pose by the sirens of the shuffleboard, and the mad devotees of ring-toss.

Not that the Podd ship was to be without its innocent pastimes. Indeed, there had been put aboard *The Future* a full supply of all the implements which may divert the serious mind in its lighter moods. But Mr. Podd had put this matter in the hands of his welfare director, the genius who had taught the Podd employees how and when to play. It was the conviction of the Podd Nozzle Company that work should cease at a given moment, and play should begin; that play should last a given time, and should then cease; and that, above all, it should be scientific and efficient. Some difficulties had been experienced at the plants, to be sure. There was a certain class of employees who were ungrateful enough to say that they didn't mind the work at the plant, but they dreaded the recreation.

On the bow, on either side, the freshly painted name *The Future,* claimed the attention of the craft which nosed up and down the Hudson estuary. The painting had been done so recently and hastily, that the former, Swedish name of the ship, *Forntiden,* still peeped through from beneath the wash-out coat. From her one funnel a barely discernible haze of smoke was coming, of that quality which said that *The Future* was fitted to consume fuel-oil. No unseemly haste was visible anywhere on or near the ship. She had taken her fuel on the Jersey side, she was well down toward her Plimsoll mark with ballast, the derricks had long since been made fast and the hatches battened, and to the idle longshoreman who looked her over and profanely discussed her mission, *The Future* was a ship which had left the world of stevedores and roustabouts,

and gone to heaven, or some other place. To the dock-workers she was worse than useless. She was taking up good space.

But Mr. Podd, walking the bridge for the first time, felt that he loved this ship. To be sure, he was not her owner. At the suggestion of the treasurer of the Podd Company, he had agreed that it was not necessary to buy a ship, when one could be chartered at a reasonable figure, particularly as Poddsville was not a seaport, and the seafaring life of Mr. Podd must come to an end within the year. But he was for all purposes the owner of the ship until the fourteenth of November of the year following, and he felt a warm glow of satisfaction as he stepped aboard and followed Captain Rumble to the chart-room, then up to the compass-room, and then down to the bridge-deck. Already Mr. Podd smelt the sea. It was an odor tinctured with oil and the unromantic sniff of New York's daily garbage going down the river on lighters behind a tug, but it had yet the salt sting in it, and Mr. Podd took a deep breath and grew mellow and full.

Willa Podd, eager-eyed and with cheeks flushed with sheer joy, stood at the bridge-deck rail, looking down into the forward well, where some men were putting the last tarry touches on the iron plates, and whispered to her father, pulling an arm close to her and weaving one of her own into it: "Bill, it's a wonderful stunt. You're a whale."

Mr. Podd modestly felt that he was, in some sort, a whale. He hoped, on reflection, that he was a right whale. And having considered the matter, putting aside any pretty egotism and pleasure, he felt sure that he was.

Early on the morning of the fourteenth of November, William Podd and his daughter went aboard *The Future* and retired immediately to their rooms. Mr. Podd's resolution being that he would see none of his fellow pilgrims until the ship was at sea. There was an oddness about this plan, Mr. Podd knew; but having decided to judge his companions solely through their letters, and to abide by any resulting mistakes, he was insistent on seeing the venture through. Besides, he realized that, on the morning of sailing, there would be a constant cry for Podd; if he answered one call he would have to answer all; if he solved one problem, he would be involved in many: he told Neale that he was not to be disturbed under any circumstances, until *The Future* was at sea.

The routine of embarking the accepted pilgrims had been arranged very simply. Each had been furnished with rail transportation from the place whence they came. Hotel accommodations had been arranged for them at a place reasonably near the pier. Each had been furnished, by registered mail with a card of identification, which would be shown to Neale at the gang-plank.

At ten o'clock that November morning, Mr. Neale, at the end of the gang-plank saw a lady of uncertain age, but with a wholly certain self-confidence, sweeping toward him, having a boy of twelve years in knickerbockers, in her wake. She held in her hand the large identification card which was necessary.

"You are Mrs. Tantruss," announced Neale, glancing at the name on the card. "Very happy to see you, Mrs. Tantruss. The card is quite in order. Don't get too near the edge, little man! There should be

someone to look after the boy, Mrs. Tantruss, after you go aboard. I suppose he came to see you off?"

Mrs. Tantruss threw back her head and gazed upon Mr. Neale with a clear toleration shining from her eyes and through her tortoise-shell-rimmed spectacles. "He is my son," she replied. "Come, Freddie."

Mrs. Tantruss pushed the boy ahead of her and set foot upon the gangplank. But Mr. Neale, though a quiet man, was a man of resolution. He gently detained the young man. "You can't take *him,* you know," he explained.

"Can't take Freddie with me?" replied Mrs. Tantruss, as though the possibility of an objection had never occurred to her. "Don't be absurd, Mr. —Mr. —What's-your-name! Do you imagine I could leave Freddie behind?"

"My name is Neale—Albert G. Neale," replied Mr. Podd's secretary. "I assure you, Mrs. Tantruss, that the card sent to you was not meant to include your family. It would be entirely irregular. Mr. Podd would object. I—"

Mrs. Tantruss glared at the secretary as though she had an unpleasant operation to perform on him, which hurt her more than it would hurt him. "My Freddie is absolutely unobjectionable," she said, in measured and precise accents, as though she had been addressing a group of persons in the lecture-room. "I have trained him myself. He is not a usual boy. I am a writer and speaker on the training of children.

Mrs. Tantruss squared her shoulders, made a little squarer by the tailored coat she wore, as though the matter were settled by this explanation.

"I do not say that Freddie is not an excellent boy. I

say that no provision has been made for taking your son with us," said Mr. Neale. "It is quite impossible, Mrs. Tantruss."

"The child is the father of the man," replied Mrs. Tantruss, speaking now with a certain compassion for the secretary's weakness of preception. "I felt so sure that Mr. Podd would like to have Freddie on the trip that it seemed not worth while to write about it. You cannot understand the mass without understanding the individual. You cannot understand the individual without understanding child-growth. Freddie is a soul, a plastic soul in bud. I have explained this in my lecture on 'Moulds and Fillings.'—Go along, Freddie."

"But he can't go along, Mrs. Tantruss. The party is to consist of eight pilgrims, not nine. Mr. Podd wishes it so. I regret—"

Mrs. Tantruss suddenly tried another tack. She dropped the lecture-room attitude and said quickly, speaking into Mr. Neale's flushed face and looking pleadingly into his eyes through her big glasses.

"I am a widow, Mr.—Neale, you said, yes Neale. I have nobody but Freddie in the world. I couldn't leave him. I am an advanced woman, but still I am a mother. Freddie will be *so* good. He has the best training. He has not been suppressed. He is natural. Children are made disagreeable by negations. Freddie has never had anything in his life but affirmations. He will be *so* good, I know. Please, Mr. Neale—"

Mr. Neale opened his mouth to resist the appeal, but at that moment Freddie, with considerable perception, in which chiefly was the perception that Mr. Neale was going to try a little negation on him for a change, tore

himself free from the secretary's detention and scampered up the gang-plank like a squirrel, crying:

"Oh, don't argue with that dumb-bell, ma. He don't know whether he's going or stopped. He's only ten minutes past one, and losing every minute." And the next moment Master Freddie disappeared into the vast entrails of *The Future*.

"Stop that boy, somebody!" cried Mr. Neale, to some possible person on the ship whose duty it might be to stop boys. But the duty had not been assigned to anybody, and while Mr. Neale was in this state of mind another pilgrim appeared, waving an identification card, and Mrs. Tantruss walked firmly up the gang-plank, followed after Freddie, and disappeared.

"I'm Pete Fink," said the newcomer.

"Mr. Fink," repeated Neale. "Right, Mr. Fink. Your baggage came aboard last night." At the same time the secretary scanned the pilgrim's person to ascertain whether there were any little Finks concealed about it.

Then came, successively, Miss Pansy Peebles, Mr. Julius Pickbill, the Rev. Joseph Loasby, Miss Lucretia Frale, Dr. George Bodger. Their papers were regular: one by one they went aboard. Meanwhile Mr. Neale had sent word to William Podd, in spite of the wishes of the manufacturer not to be disturbed, that Mrs. Tantruss, one of the pilgrims, had gone aboard with a young son, against orders. Quite unexpectedly word came back from Mr. Podd:

"The boy may stay."

Neale took a long breath of relief. But he did not feel, somehow, that he had done his full duty in the

matter; and what made this feeling more acute was that such a feeling was new to him.

It was getting near the hour of sailing, now, but the eighth pilgrim had not arrived. David Dostey was missing. David Dostey was late. Mr. Neale walked up and down, now and again referring to his memoranda to be sure that David Dostey had been supplied with an identification card. He had. The receipt for the registered letter was among the others. He had been at the hotel,too. But a telephone inquiry at the hotel revealed the fact that David Dostey had left the hotel very early in the morning, and that, though he had been in the room, the *bed had not been slept in.*

Naturally, this worried Mr. Neale. He was metropolitan-bred himself, and his mind easily conjured up the possible mischances which could happen to a man from Waycross, Georgia (the place where David Dostey came from) in a great city like New York.

At quarter to twelve Mr. Neale shouted in a loud voice to the crowd which was being kept back from the gang-plank by ropes and policemen:

"Is David Dostey here?"

"Here I am!" cried fifteen eager newspaper reporters in one voice, trying to leap both crowd and ropes.

A great shout went up for Dostey. It carried from one end of the pier to the other. It went out into West Street, filtered through the maze of trucks and wagons, and penetrated all the side thoroughfares which empty into the broad highway in front of the docks. "Dostey! Dostey!" But there was no answer. Dostey did not appear. At least not the true Dostey, though there seemed to be thousands who had recently adopted the name, and were willing to be pilgrims with Podd.

Suddenly, from one of the intersecting streets there was a roar of voices. "Make way, there! Here he comes! Let him through! Here comes Dostey!"

A taxicab hurled itself through the crowd, miraculously saving lives, as it went by, by narrowly missing them. Through the windows of the rocking taxi could be seen a small figure, sometimes on the seat, sometimes half-standing and clutching at the front windows; and the figure had blond mustache which swept back against a pair of thin cheeks; and the eyes were ablaze with excitement and pleasurable anticipation. In one hand the figure clutched a watch.

The taxicab dashed across the great West Street, at slackened speed curving around trucks and drays, and seeming to leap certain smaller obstructions, and halted with a jerk in front of the entrance to Pier 21. Strong police opened a way for the voyager to alight. "Dostey! Dostey! Dostey!"

The small man jumped from the taxicab, valise in hand, tossed the driver two crumpled banknotes and ran toward the dark cavern of the inner pier. "Where's Podd?" the figure cried as it ran.

"Dostey's here! Here comes Dostey!" yelled the crowd.

Mr. Neale saw the figure coming. He rushed forward, crying, "You're almost too late, my friend," and seized the valise from the little man's hand. Then he took one arm, and one of the ship's crew took the other, and the newcomer was rushed, fuming and expostulating and crying, "Where's Podd?" up the gang-plank, and aboard *The Future*.

A boatswain's whistle shrilled from the ship. The gang-plank rolled back upon the wharf. A bell jangled

faintly, somewhere down below. The big whistle gave a long, defiant cry which echoed and re-echoed along the waterside. Instantly afterwards there was such a din from hundreds of sirens and ship-whistles as the venerable Hudson had not heard for many a year. And, slowly, *The Future* moved along the pierside.

In the whistling and din the little man who had been hustled aboard the ship at the last moment, stood stunned and deafened at the spot where his capturers had left him. He tried to cry "Podd!" and his voice was not heard even by himself. He picked up his bag and stood as though considering leaping with it over the ship's side and upon the wharf.

Then, as the whistling ceased, he ran about the deck shouting, "I demand to see Podd! Where is Podd?" Nobody paid any attention to him. A deck-hand, who was making a rope fast, looked at him with sardonic curiosity.

"Where's Podd?" shrieked the little man.

At this moment the busy Mr. Neale came along, and the little man with the valise turned upon him savagely. "I demand to be put ashore at once! At once, you understand!"

"Now don't shout that way, and don't be ridiculous," replied Neale, sauvely. "You know we can't put you ashore. Don't be alarmed, my friend: (this was spoken soothingly) I assure you you are quite safe."

"I am not safe! I am among lunatics! I insist on going ashore. I'll have the law on you!"

Even Mr. Neale was capable of being exasperated in the face of this fickleness on the part of a pilgrim. Besides, he had worried enough about the belated voyager, as it was. He spoke severely now:

"Mr. Dostey," said the secretary, "you are not doing yourself justice. You have given us a great deal of trouble. Against our wishes you left your hotel last night and wandered about the city, nearly missing the ship. Now that you are aboard, you want to change your mind. It cannot be, Mr. Dostey. Recollect, sir, that you eagerly begged of Mr. Podd the privilege of helping him to carry out his great plan, by going around the world with him. Remember that, Mr. Dostey, and be reasonable."

The other man's eyes popped dreadfully. He waved his arms in the air, and tried to interrupt the secretary, but his voice simply spit and wheezed like a balky gasoline engine. But, at the end of the other's reprimand, he suddenly found voice, and it came like a Northeast gale.

"You blithering booby! You poor simpleton!" cried the little man, menacing Neale with the upraised valise. "My name is not Dostey! I never asked that jackass Podd a favor, and never will. I came here to tell him what I think of him! My name is not Dostey, do you hear? My name is Henry Waddick, curse you!"

"Waddick?" repeated the amazed secretary. The name meant nothing to him. Mr. Waddick's letters had been weeded out of the welter before Neale's weeding began. He looked pityingly upon the other man. Then he said, blandly but triumphantly:

"If your name is Waddick, why did you tell us it was Dostey?"

Having uttered this sage rebuke, Mr. Neale turned and walked away.

Henry P. Waddick recoiled, spat, trembled, and then staggered to the ship's rail and leaned against it heavily.

He felt that his head was going to burst, and from the violent pumping of his heart, he knew that that organ would quickly follow. Already *The Future* had made her swing in the stream, and was going down with the current and tide. The great stone figure of New York's sky-line, belted with jewels, swam before the grocer's eyes. Then, his nerves suddenly letting go, Mr. Waddick burst into tears.

Mr. Waddick was a shanghaied Pilgrim.

V

THE New Jersey coast-line had just faded into the hazy fairy-land where sky and ocean meet, when Willa Podd came out upon the boat-deck, took a long draught of the sea breeze, and began to swing up and down the restricted promenade, on the weather side, at a pace which declared the vigorous youthful blood which coursed through her veins. Her tweed sport-skirt, marked with the big diagonals of some dressmaker's highland clan, was short enough to permit a stride which tested the limitations of the cargo-boat promenade deck. A snow-white sweater-coat, free at the neck, made her cheeks seem even rosier than they were. She wore no hat, but an invisible hair-net kept her hair in leash. She seemed to Julius Pickbill, who came out upon the deck a few moments later, and stood by the door watching her discreetly for several minutes, a very sound and complete young woman.

Mr. Pickbill was a man who would have attracted some attention in a crowd, chiefly on account of his nose. Had he been of sufficient political account to be cartooned, every cartoonist would have seized upon that ample nose with a cry of joy. It was a very large nose; and yet a very good nose. That is, it was not a distorted or disfigured nose. Where most people's noses leave off, as having done all that can be expected of one nose, Mr. Pickbill's nose was just beginning. From that point it romped toward size, impressive-

ness and proportion. It was such a good, wholesome oversize nose as experts in physiognomy tell us goes with the capacity for making a huge success of life.

Most people in viewing Julius Pickbill's nose, would have been quite content to take the rest of his countenance on credit. In so doing, they would have missed the much better part of his features—a pair of kindly, sensitive, timid blue eyes, which rested upon each object with the curious good-will of a healthy and unspoiled country lad. Indeed, there was something essentially boyish and innocent about those eyes. They gave the rebuke to the gray hairs which were beginning to scatter freely over Mr. Pickbill's ears, throughout his mud-colored hair. They defied the thinness of his hair over his temples. They made the beholder ignore the fact that Mr. Pickbill's clothes, though neat, were ready-made and a trifle shabby. They disguised the defect of a brown derby hat which was not quite large enough for his goodly head.

Miss Podd, swinging past the man at the doorway, caught a glimpse of that great nose, and those blue eyes, and was arrested more by the eyes than by the nose; though she was not a person to underestimate a consummate nose. She stopped short on her round, thrust her hands into the pockets of her sweater, standing with legs apart in true nautical fashion, and looked Mr. Pickbill full in the face with friendly interest. There was, also, an expression of challenging humor in her eyes.

"Good afternoon," said Willa, gaily. "Isn't it the most glorious day? I am Miss Podd, the daughter of William Podd."

As Mr. Pickbill reached out to take the frank hand,

be blushed bashfully, and replied in a low voice, "My name is Julius Pickbill, Miss Podd, I'm very happy to meet you, and thank you kindly."

"You like it? Isn't it ripping?" said Miss Podd, indicating the ocean and the sky and the sunlight with one sweep of her right hand.

"Yes, indeed," replied Pickbill. "It's grand."

For a moment, a swift change in Miss Podd's thoughts seemed to take the joy out of her being. She glanced at the man shrewdly and asked: "I suppose you have some plan for making the world a better place to live in, Mr. Pickbill?"

"No, I haven't," said Pickbill, after an awkward hesitation. "I—I'm sorry, Miss Podd, but I'm afraid I haven't. I ought to have, I know. But I said in my letter to your father—"

"Oh, it's too good to be true!" cried the young woman, to the utter astonishment of her companion. "It was too much to hope; but somehow I felt that you didn't have any program. I've been looking over the rest of the pilgrims. They've got set faces, as though they were rehearsing speeches. Do come and walk with me, Mr. Pickbill, won't you?"

Mr. Pickbill was embarrassed to find an arm already linked with one of his, and without knowing just how it happened, he found himself going at goodly strides up and down the brief deck, and being catechised, and making answers, which he ardently hoped were not too disappointing.

"I ought to tell you the entire truth about myself, so that there won't be any misunderstanding," said Julius, quietly, when he got an opportunity. "I am

not a successful man at anything, Miss Podd. I'm afraid I'm a failure."

"That's good, too," was the surprising comment. "A failure. That's fine, maybe. You see, Mr. Pickbill, the only men I've known very intimately were great successes. Mind, now, I don't say there's anything necessarily meritorious about being a failure. Some failures are very unpleasant, selfish people, and they don't deserve to fail. They deserve to succeed—at something unpleasant. Some successful people are quite nice. My father is quite nice. You'll notice it as we go on. I suppose it all depends on the man. But it's really quite exciting to meet a man who says he is a failure, and doesn't blame anyone else for it, in the same breath."

"I am a natural failure," said Pickbill. "At least, I suppose I am. I am one of those men who have all the qualifications to fail with, and don't seem to need any outside help. I don't know as you would understand—"

"No, I don't. But it's interesting. Please tell me all about yourself."

"I'll do it gladly, Miss Podd, though I can't see how it would interest you. I've lived all my life in Dover, New Hampshire. When I was seventeen, I went to work in a restaurant, washing dishes and cleaning up. I worked hard, because—well, I was born that way, too. Later, the man who owned the place taught me to cook. Gradually, I got ahead and went into business for myself."

"Are you a good cook? asked Willa. "I ask, because I am not, myself."

"Yes," replied Pickbill, thoughtfully, "I am a good cook. But my specialty is doughnuts."

"I like doughnuts—the old-fashioned kind. My mother used to make them, when I was a little girl. We weren't rich then. Somehow, you don't eat doughnuts after you get rich. Not because you can't—but—oh, well, people don't want you to, and you're too tired to fight about it."

"The old-fashioned kind is the kind I made," went on Pickbill, and his eyes glistened with enthusiasm as he thought of his artisanship. "Everyone in Dover knows about my doughnuts. They began calling me "The Doughnut King." That was to make fun of me—but it was a good advertising sign, so when I owned my first restaurant, I put that sign over the door: "Pickbill, The Doughnut King."

"I'll wager you ran a good restaurant. Did you have lots of trade?"

"Oh, yes. But the more trade I had, the more money I lost. I don't exactly know why. I think I gave too much food for the money. I failed up there, and had to start a smaller restaurant. And I failed there, and started a smaller one. Each time I failed, the new place was smaller, till finally I had just a little place big enough for six stools, and a counter, and room for me behind the counter. I just failed there last month, so that's why I am here."

"But how could you fail, when your food was good, and—I don't see the reason, Mr. Pickbill."

"Of course, I'm not sure," was the reply. "But, as I say, I had the habit of giving too much food for the money, and I couldn't get out of it. That was one thing. I guess the people who make money in

the restaurant business are the ones who give too little for the money. And then, I didn't have any signs."

"Signs? What kind of signs?"

"I mean the signs that you see in restaurants: *'We aim to serve the public.' 'Your satisfaction is our ambition.'* Signs like that. I suppose I ought to have had these signs. All successful restaurants do. And then, while the war was on, and sugar was short, all the successful restaurants used to put one spoonful of sugar in an envelop, and serve half-portions of food at twice the old price, or a little more, and ask everybody to help them win the war. I didn't catch on to those ideas. My mind works slow, I guess. As I said, I'm a natural kind of a failure. Still, sometimes I think if I could get hold of another little restaurant, I could make it go this time. I'm only forty-five years old. I know a location—"

Mr. Pickbill felt a gentle pressure from the arm that was under his arm, and heard a voice say, to his great amazement, "I think I'm going to like you, Pickbill." But before he could certify this extraordinary proceeding, the voice added, "Oh, look down there! What's the matter?"

Miss Podd pointed down into the forward well, where an undersized human figure, with face and clothes as white as those of a man who has been shoveling lime from a freight-car, was eluding two or three pursuers, chief of whom was Mr. Neale, and crying, in terrified tones, "You lemme 'lone! I ain't done nothing! You lemme 'lone."

Suddenly the white figure reached the foot of the stairs which led to the boat deck, and scrambled up

them like a monkey. He was halted by the sure and strong hand of Miss Podd.

"I won't let them hurt you," she promised the trembling white figure, who was whimpering and sobbing in her grip. "Who are you, and what is the matter?"

"I'm Dave Dostey," was the reply. "I'm one of the passengers."

"Dave Dostey!" cried Neale, who had arrived at the top of the stairway. "Nonsense!"

"Well, I am, and there's my card," said the white figure. He took the Podd invitation from his pocket and held it out, at the same time shrinking more closely to Willa Podd's skirt.

Neale looked at the card, and seemed about to collapse. "But if you are Dostey, you had a right to come aboard in the regular way," he gasped. "Why did you have yourself smuggled on board concealed in a flour-barrel?"

"My pappy did that," was the reply.

"Your pappy! What do you mean, your pappy?"

"My father. He said maybe if I went on board the regular way, I'd get put off before the boat left. You see, I ain't got all my buttons, pappy said, and he knowed if he was to get me off his hands, he'd have to be mighty peart about it."

"You—haven't—got—all your buttons?" asked Neale, staring at the youth's clothing, and counting the white coat buttons which were in view. "What's that got to do with it?"

"That's a saying, if you'll excuse me," suggested Julius Pickbill. It means that he isn't quite all there, in his upper story. A little deficient."

"That's right! He knows!" shouted David Dostey, triumphantly, as though he had proved an important point to the world.

Mr. Neale stood in awful uncertainty. He had no words to deal adequately with such a situation. But he struggled out, "Who wrote that letter to Mr. Podd, for you? *You* couldn't have!"

"Pappy gave the editor of our weekly paper five dollars to write it," said David Dostey, proudly. "The editor, he's a right smart man, he is."

"Come with me and get washed. You must speak with Mr. Podd," was all Neale could say.

VI

Henry P. Waddick, while these events were going forward, was cooling his heels and warming his temper in a corner of the small lounge which had been installed in *The Future* when she was built to carry a few passengers, on her regular cargo runs from Gothenburg to Buenos Ayres. It was a comfortable little sitting room, with wall-seats all around, a few card tables, and upholstery of the inviting and abiding kind which the Scandinavians still know how to make.

Mr. Waddick was waiting with gloomy satisfaction, the moment when he should meet Mr. Podd. He was preparing for the moment by going back through the corridors of his memory and scraping together all the choice bits of invective which were stored there. The only thing which annoyed Mr. Waddick was the realization that his vocabulary was too limited. Previously, he had always been quite content with his range of diction. Now, at this juncture, he remembered with an envious pang a certain truckman who had once worked for him, who had backed his truck through the plate glass windows of Kingman's Undertaking Rooms; and Mr. Waddick tried vainly to recall all the language which his gifted truckman used upon that occasion.

Mr. Waddick was also trying to remember what the penalty was for springing at an adversary and throttling him till he became blue in the face. He wondered if the penalty for this triumph was increased or nul-

lified by the fact of performing the operation upon the high seas. Then, finally, a steward approached the Grape City merchant and said, "Mr. Podd wishes to know if you would come to his room, sir." Henry Waddick sprang forward galvanically.

Mr. Podd, greatly disturbed by the information conveyed to him by his secretary, concerning the strange advent of David Dostey, and the unfortunate embarkation of Mr. Waddick by mistake, was seated at his desk in his private room on the starboard side, forward, just beneath the chart-room. It was a cheery place, with a porthole looking toward the bow of the ship, and two portholes on the starboard side. There were red roses in a vase on the desk, and bright cretonne curtains, and a roomy berth with an additional sofa which could be made up into another bed. Mr. Podd's face conveyed several emotions, of which the most apparent was one of puzzlement. But he rose and smiled cordially, as Mr. Waddick entered, and held out his hand.

"I'm very, very sorry," began Mr. Podd, at once, "that this thing has happened, Mr. Waddick. I don't see how my secretary could have been so careless. Of course, your coming late to the ship convinced him that you were a certain David Dostey, who was expected to be aboard. But he should not have taken it for granted. I hope that you will not be greatly inconvenienced by this accident, and I shall be glad to land you at any port you wish, and compensate you for any loss you may suffer. Or, to make amends, I should be glad of your company as far as the West Indies, if you have time to make a little excursion of it."

This was a long speech for Mr. Podd, but he was obviously trying to state as much as possible of his apology and defense before the could be interrupted. "Will you sit down?" he concluded, indicating the sofa which faced the porthole that looked forward.

Mr. Waddick's mouth twitched nervously. There were hundreds of furious words waiting to leap from his mouth, but something dammed them up. The fact was, though Mr. Waddick did not know it, he was overtrained. He had crammed too hard, like a college boy going up for exams, and had jammed the exit of his passion. He found himself sitting down wearily in the place indicated, and waiting for the words to come.

There was something else which was affecting Mr. Waddick strangely, too. He did not know exactly what it was. In spite of the beautiful weather, there was a bit of sea running on the Jersey coast, and the staunch little Swedish craft was enjoying herself in it, like a frolicking porpoise. She ran into it, tossed it over her shoulder, and then, throwing back her nose, shook her head a moment in preparation for another plunge. But it had a queer effect upon the Grape City grocer. He felt that if he should close his eyes, something unpleasant would happen.

Now, as he sat looking through the forward porthole, he observed with surprise that sometimes the bow of the ship was up, and sometimes it was down. Sometimes he could see the greenish blue water, and a moment later what he saw was blue sky. This going up and coming down, of the foremast, disconcerted the grocer. It occurred to him, with sudden clarity,

that it might be this motion which was preventing him from speaking as he had planned to speak.

William Podd, on his side, was facing the two portholes which looked to starboard. He was having much the same experience as Mr. Waddick. Sometimes he saw the sea, and then the sea suddenly went away from the world, and left such a hole in its place that Mr. Podd's fingers gripped his chair to keep from dropping into the abyss. The vase with the roses in it began to slide from the desk. Mr. Podd saw it sliding. He knew he could stop it. But in order to stop it, he would have to let go one hand from his chair, and this did not seem desirable. So he saw the vase go off the edge of the desk and shatter on the floor, and somehow he did not seem to care. He felt a vague sense of relief that the thing was over.

Then Mr. Podd took a good hold of himself and began to speak to Mr. Waddick. "Perhaps you know, Mr.—Mr.—" He forgot the other gentleman's name, and waited a moment for Mr. Waddick to supply it. But no sound came from the grocer. "I ought to tell you the—the reason for our voyage—if you'd like to know—we came—I thought—"

Mr. Podd passed his hand over his forehead and stopped. Then he said, "If you wouldn't think it rude of me, Mr.—Mr.—I think I could speak to you better lying down. I'm really—so many things have happened—lying down—down—"

Mr. Podd rose unsteadily and sought the berth. Happily the berth obligingly came half way to meet him, and he tipped over into it, with his feet hanging off the edge. He still struggled nobly with his dis-

course. "Things have happened—things—my apologies—it was strange—perhaps you'd like to lie down—"

"Thanks, I will," responded Mr. Waddick.

All Mr. Waddick had to do, to lie down, was to fall over. He did this. He looked at Mr. Podd, and discovered that Mr. Podd was going away. He was almost half a mile away. Now he was a mile away. He tried to warn Mr. Podd that if he continued to go away at that rate, he would be off the ship. He saw a little fly-speck on a white mountain, several miles off, and concluded that it must be Mr. Podd. Then he reasoned that it would be useless to call a man a jackass, and other epithets, when the man was so far away on a white mountain.

Mr. Waddick heard a voice saying, "I'm not feeling well. Can you reach that bell?"

Mr. Waddick understood that there was a bell somewhere in the room, and that Mr. Podd was asking him to push on it, with the idea of something happening as a result. But Mr. Waddick felt that he did not want anything particular to happen. He did not see a bell (there being no bell on the ceiling) and he didn't care whether he saw a bell. He suddenly saw his store in Grape City, with the canned goods in the windows, and a long spiral of sticky fly-paper, with last summer's flies still adhering to it; and he recalled that the Main street of Grape City did not go up and down when one walked on it, or sat looking at it. He wished he were there. Yet he did not wish it very ardently. He did not wish anything very much. He heard somebody groan. He thought it was Mr. Podd. But it might be himself. He heard it distinctly, and as he was nearer to himself than Mr. Podd was, it

was probably his own groan. But he wasn't much interested in the groan. It was an ordinary groan; a no-account groan.

Suddenly Mr. Waddick saw something pass him, hurriedly, and go out at the door. This shocked him so that he sat up and looked at the bed where Mr. Podd had been lying. It was empty. He waited a long time and Mr. Podd came back. "It's a terrible sea," he heard Mr. Podd say. He also heard Mr. Podd say, "Oh!"

Mr. Waddick sat up on the edge of his sofa. Mr. Podd sat on the edge of his bed. They looked at each other, long and strangely. Mr. Waddick did not hate Mr. Podd any more. Mr. Podd was not interested in Mr. Waddick. A great impulse of brotherhood had swept over them and made them think the same thoughts—nothing; made them wish the same wishes —nothing; made them thrill with the same ambition— to die. When Mr. Podd fell off the bed upon the floor, Mr. Waddick felt so brotherly that soon afterwards he also fell off his sofa, and lay for a long time with his feet resting affectionately upon one of Mr. Podd's hands.

VII

When the next daylight came and he found himself still alive and feeling remarkably fi., Henry Waddick, surrounded by a smooth sea, and fanned by light, warm breezes, began to enjoy the cruise decidedly. Mr. Podd gladly gave him permission to send a wireless message to Mrs. Waddick. Mr. Waddick had no faith in the ability of a message to jump off a ship into the atmosphere, and land safely at the Grape City store; and yet he could not doubt the authenticity of the wireless reply which was handed to him several hours later:

Henry P. Waddick,
On board S. S. *Future,* via Saybrook.
Business better since you left. Suggest you take long vacation which you deserve. I will take care of everything.
Lovingly,
Priscilla Wheeler Waddick.

Mr. Waddick stared at the message a long time. It was certainly from his wife. It could not be a hoax. No person on board the ship knew his wife's given name, and certainly no one knew her maiden name. There was a slight tinge of disparagement contained in the remark that business was better since he left; but Mr. Waddick rested on that point only momentarily. He did feel in need of a change. And he did feel that Fate was ordering him to proceed with the Podd pilgrims.

Mr. Podd, who was also feeling very well after his

slight malaise of the previous day, welcomed the continued presence of the grocer with hearty good will. He had already discovered that Mr. Waddick was a casehardened conservative. It was part of Mr. Podd's ambition to convert such men whenever possible. The upshot of it was that Mr. Waddick became—not exactly a Podd pilgrim, but, so to speak, an associate pilgrim, a pilgrim who had begun his affiliation by taking a demit.

That day there was great enthusiasm among the Podd pilgrims. On the previous day, Messrs. Podd and Waddick had not been the only ones aboard the ship who felt incommoded by the gentle playfulness of the *Future*. With the exception of Julius Pickbill and Willa Podd, who delighted in the eccentric motion, the pilgrims, including Mr. Neale, would not have been sufficiently interested to attend their own funerals; and if the nations could have been saved by stretching out a hand, the pilgrims would have kept their hands tightly pressed against their foreheads—which was exactly where they did keep them.

But now all was preparation aboard the *Future,* for the great flow of ideas which was to take place that evening in the common lounge. The Rev. Joseph Loasby, an Episcopalian minister who had become a Unitarian because he felt that he could no longer support the doctrine of the Trinity, and dressed and spoke as much like a layman as he could, because he felt that sacerdotal pomp was prejudicial to the Great Truths, walked about the deck with his hands thrust in what would have been the tail-pockets of his long coat if he had not discarded that pompous article in favor of a business-man's sack-suit. He carried his hands

behind him, and a large dental smile in front of him. By eleven o'clock in the forenoon Mr. Loasby had quite won the heart of Mrs. Tantruss by remarking that "thought was everything." Mrs. Tantruss felt exactly this way about thought. She put her head a trifle to one side and looked at Mr. Loasby with what might be called intellectual coquettishness.

"*New* thought is everything," said Mrs. Tantruss.

"Of course," replied Mr. Loasby. "Cela va sans dire."

Mrs. Tantruss said soon afterward to Miss Pansy Peebles, the Tennessee poetess, who was sitting on a camp-stool putting the finishing touches to a piece of free verse, "You must really meet Mr. Loasby, as soon as possible. Not a bit like a parson, and he speaks so entertainingly about New Thought. He's a man of wide education, too. Speaks French fluently."

Miss Peebles hastened to make the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Loasby and found him all that had been reported. He playfully forced the poem from Miss Peebles' hand, in spite of her modest protestation, and proceeded to read it aloud; thereupon declaring that it was as fine a piece of brave insurgency as he had ever seen.

"Then you, too, are an insurgent!" said Miss Peebles, with glistening eyes.

"Life itself is insurgency," said Mr. Loasby. "Only death is static and conservative. Life bids us fight against the *status quo*. *There* is our enemy, Miss Peebles—we must slay the *status quo*. Goliath though that enemy be—there are a few of us, are there not, who have the little slings which will rid the liberal path of that giant of stupidity."

"If I could not be an insurgent, I should as soon not exist," murmured Miss Peebles, half closing her eyes.

"This is a wonderful thing which Mr. Podd is doing," continued the minister. Something great will come of this. We are only a little band, but our voice will be heard. Have you read his book?"

"Not yet. But I have my precious copy, which I found in my room when I came aboard, under my pillow. You have read it?"

"Not yet. But I look forward to it keenly. The world needs more Podds. The world needs more liberal minds—unfettered minds. I make no secret of the fact, to you, Miss Peebles, that I am not long remaining in the ministry. Even the Unitarian church cannot hold my interest. I find it too emotional. We must found, along with our international commonwealth, a fitting ethical cult which will take the place of the old religions of hysteria and class-oppression. Instead of a priesthood—a plain-speaking brother, Instead of a pulpit—a hassock of greensward on which to lie and communally surrender our spirits to contemplation. I shall speak more about this subject tonight. And you, of course, will read your poem, will you not? We need poetry. Every true poem is another nail in the coffin of commercialism and stall-fed government."

"Do you believe in anarchy?" asked Miss Peebles, in a whisper.

"Yes, and no. I go farther than anarchy. Anarchy is good, but it implies a subordination of the mind to formula. No-government is a formula, like government."

"You are an inspiration, Mr. Loasby," sighed Miss

Peebles. "I confess, though, I had always leaned toward philosophic anarchy."

"Thank you," said Mr. Loasby, acknowledging the compliment. "When I was younger, I too leaned toward anarchy. I see now it is merely a stepping stone toward the greater freedom. And, by the way, Miss Peebles, if you don't mind, will you call me 'Joe?' I want everybody to call me 'Joe.' It is a small matter, but it is part of my manumission from sacredotalism. It is my little insurgency against forms, you see."

"Well, *Joe,* then," replied Miss Peebles, but without relish. She had always rather had a weakness for the ministerial embodiment, especially when accompanied by a good figure—which Mr. Loasby had—and she felt that he might still be an insurgent and keep the form. But, all in all, she was pleased with him.

Mr. Loasby turned from this conquest to Pete Fink.

Mr. Fink was standing with his hands in his pockets and his legs straddled each side of a scupper-hole, his breast leaning against the iron bulwark, smoking a corn-cob pipe, and now and then spitting into the sea with unstudied grace and precision. Now and then, also, he pulled a folded sheet of paper from his pocket and glanced at it, and then moved his mouth as though reciting. Mr. Fink was committing his speech to memory. His plan was to address the pilgrims that evening on a subject which had never failed to get him applause in Southern Ohio, among the factory-workers. It was called, "Let Us Fellows Own the Tool of Production."

Mr. Fink, a short, squarely-built man of thirty-seven, with stubby fingers, on one of which shone a

large diamond, was the organizer of the Central Ohio Carpenters' Union. But he was more than this. He went from place to place, by invitation, in the interest of Syndicalism. He was a self-contained person, of the mechanic-type, gruff in his exterior manner, suspicious of strangers, but really quite good-natured by impulse.

Mr. Fink, however tolerant he might have been on some matters, was a stern believer in "going the whole hog." What he meant by this was, that a socialist is a man who has a card and pays his dues. A man who says he "thinks there is a lot in socialism," or "would rather see a socialist in office than some people he knows," or who "sympathizes with socialism," was not, in Mr. Fink's estimation a desirable person. To be a socialist, you had to belong. If you didn't belong, you were an enemy. It was the same with Syndicalism. Either you were, or you weren't. If you were, you paid dues to the organization. If you didn't pay dues, you'd better keep still about it. Your sympathy wasn't wanted by Mr. Fink. In other words, Mr. Fink, without knowing it, was filled with the same fervor for organization as the early and middle Christian fathers. A good many people who were "almost" Catholics, or who "had strong sympathies" with Catholicism, were massacred on St. Bartholomew's day. And Mr. Fink would probably, had he lived at that period, have been one of the torch-bearers.

Thus, Mr. Pete Fink was not the kind of man who would have any strong friendship with the Rev. Joseph Loasby, who resented the payment of any dues whatever, even so far as giving Caesar what belonged to him. "Joe" Loasby was the sort of man who could

wring more active hate from Mr. Fink's soul than even the plasterers—and Pete Fink hated plasterers with an undying hatred, because they seldom struck when the Ohio carpenters struck, but when they did strike, then they had the cheek to ask the carpenters to strike with *them*.

What Mr. Fink said to Mr. Loasby, on being harangued by Mr. Loasby, will remain forever unknown. The argument did not last very long. At the conclusion of it, Mr. Loasby walked away, slightly flushed, and Mr. Fink spat into the Atlantic, and again rehearsed his speech.

Dr. George Bodger had by this time come on deck, and was gazing around at ship and ocean with an air of proprietorship. He was a spare man, of ten inches more than five feet height, and distinguished chiefly by a carefully dressed beard, brownish-black, which he parted exactly in the middle, beneath his chin, and brushed sidewise. His mustache, flowing freely East and West, like his beard, was neatly barbered. Nothing of his face showed through the hair except his two cheeks. His eyes, though a trifle bloodshot, were eager and roving, and when they fastened to a human object, they seemed to leap upon that object and begin to bore into it with surgeon-like celerity.

Dr. Bodger was bareheaded, showing to advantage a shock of glossy hair the exact color of his beard and mustache. A few strands of white were showing along the part in the middle.

Julius Pickbill happened to be nearest to the doctor when the latter emerged on deck, so he was speedily made aware of the doctor's arrival. "Good morning,

sir," was the salute. "I trust your peristalsis is active this morning!"

Pickbill bowed and smiled. He did not know what his peristalsis was, but he was not the man to spoil a good greeting by showing ignorance of the key-word, so he replied, brightly, "Oh, yes, doctor, never better!"

"I am glad to hear that," said the doctor, briskly. "That shows that you are not an auto-intoxicated fool, like most of the people."

"I never use it in any form," said Julius, simply.

"You never use what?" returned the doctor, almost savagely. "I am not referring to alcohol. Alcohol does little harm, compared with faulty habits of diet. Look around you, sir!" Mr. Pickbill obligingly looked around. "No!" commanded the doctor. "I don't mean around the deck! I mean around the world!" Pickbill obliged again by looking around as much of the world as was visible from his limited marine position.

"Look at the ninnies!" shouted the doctor. "Killing themselves, day by day! Gorging themselves on proteins that putrify in the intestines! You talk about poverty and crime and war, don't you? Don't you, now?"

"Very little, doctor," gasped Pickbill, edging back from his companion timidly.

"Yes, you do! And you never realize that disease and poverty, and crime and war spring from a common source—auto-toxaemia! First, chronic acidosis! Then colitis! Then your man runs amuck. Of course he does. It affects the whole nervous system. Do you know, sir, what caused the Napoleonic wars? It was because that great fool, Bonaparte, was a victim

of colitis. So was the Kaiser. So were the fools who fought for them—and against them, for that matter. Podd talks about brotherhood—about the commonwealth of Nations. Very good: I am with him, heart and soul. But he does not know the cure for our ills. I do. I shall show him the truth. Diet! Correct eating habits!"

Mr. Pickbill, having been a restaurant keeper, and being, in a sense, a temporarily deposed food King, was interested now. This was in his line. He perked up enough courage to ask, "Don't you think doughnuts are all right, doctor?"

Dr. Bodger almost left the deck, with the force of his feeling. "Poison! Poison!" he cried. Doughnuts! My God! What are they? I ask you, what are they? Balls of starch, embalmed in a jacket of indigestible hog-fat. What juices could break down that combination? The gastric juice will have nothing to do with them. It forced them into the colon, and there is the beginning of auto-intoxication. Pies! Hot breads! Doughnuts! You might as well take arsenic, and die a peaceful death!"

"I had no idea they were so bad as that," said Pickbill, more hurt than he was willing to show.

"No, you didn't. Nobody seems to. Podd doesn't. But he will. I tell you there can be no such thing as brotherhood and commonwealth until diet is standardized throughout the world. An auto-intoxicated man is a bad man. A nation with colitis is a wicked nation, ever ready to go to war. Give people natural foods, and they will live natural lives. Their eyes become clear, their tongues lose their coat, their pulse is regular; they sleep like children. Look at me!"

Pickbill looked at the doctor's bloodshot eyes, and said nothing.

"And they pass laws against alcohol!" went on the doctor. "Always passing laws against something—but never passing laws for anything. I would pass a law, sir, which would force every man, woman, and child to eat natural foods—fruits, nuts, and green leaves, figs, prunes, dates, lettuce, olives, and the like. I would pass a law to compel every citizen of my country to drink *one glass* of luke-warm water every morning, and then leave water alone for the rest of the day. If they ate hot-bread, I would clap them into jail—like that!" The doctor snapped his fingers to indicate how quickly the clapping would take place.

"But the jails would be full, I'm afraid," ventured Pickbill.

"Let them be full, then. For years I have been trying to get my ideas before the swine-like public. I have been jeered at; jeered at by my own medical profession. Why? Because it is money in the pockets of my profession to have an epidemic of colitis constantly in progress. Clean the colon, and you have no need for doctors! Metchnikoff was a rabid ass, but he knew that! Do you mean to tell me," said the doctor, stepping nearer to his auditor and shaking a finger in Pickbill's face, "that you are not in favor of a clean colon?"

"Of course not," Pickbill hastened to say. "I'm sorry if I gave you that idea."

"Well, then," said the doctor, suddenly mollified, "you are that much ahead. Will you come with me and have a glass of warm water?"

Pickbill loathed warm water, except as applied to

his hands. But there seemed to be no way out. With his usual docility he followed the doctor below, wondering how Mr. Podd would look upon this novel scheme of Bodger's for renovating and improving the world.

"We will have our glass of warm water, and then you shall hear me present my ideas to Mr. Podd," said the doctor, warming into great favor toward the docile Pickbill. But, as they went below, they saw through the open door of Mr. Podd's room, that he was in earnest conversation with a young woman, one of the Pilgrims, who had kept altogether to herself since she came aboard. It was Miss Lucretia Frale.

The doctor nudged Pickbill, and winked one eye expressingly. "Unless I am an egregious ass," whispered the doctor, "that young woman is not all she should be."

"Not—all she should be?" repeated Pickbill, innocently.

"I am a man of experience," added Bodger, "Selah!"

Indeed, William Podd was at the very moment being severely exercised concerning the young woman in question.

Miss Frale, a quiet, modestly-dressed figure of a girl, pale, with eyes that shone with an unhealthy lustre, and seemed to have the sorrow of disillusion so deeply rooted in them that the chance observer would never be conscious of it—Miss Frale sat opposite Mr. Podd, with the desk between them, and waited in patience while Mr. Podd read, and reread the letter which had gained for Miss Frale her position as one of the pilgrims.

Having read the letter, Mr. Podd passed his hand wearily across his eyes, and spoke hesitatingly.

"What you have told me, Miss Frale," he said, "shocks me, inexpressibly. I—I am far from judging or blaming you. I see by your letter that you were not deceiving me. Certain phrases are now clear to me, which I must have misunderstood. I was struck by a certain tragic note in your words, a clear, deep sympathy which you expressed with all suffering humanity, and a righteous indignation against oppression and injustice. I—I do not know exactly what to say. Heaven knows, I should be the last person to turn from you, because—because of what you have revealed concerning yourself. If the word brotherhood means anything, it means that no person, however unfortunate, should be outside the pale of our affections. I hesitate only because of the prejudices of others.—Did you say that Mrs. Tantruss refused to sit opposite you at table?"

"Yes, but I don't mind that, Mr. Podd. I can sit alone, if that is all that matters."

"I will try to show the ladies that we are all mere flesh and blood, and that we cannot, as workers for a just form of government and social life, afford to begin with bias against any living soul," said Podd.

"You're very nice about it. I thank you," said Miss Frale. "If I'd known that my coming wouldn't be liked, I shouldn't have been here," she went on. "It seemed to me from the way your piece in the papers spoke that you were getting together a party of people I could work with for my beliefs, and who would take me as I am, just a human being who wants to injure nobody."

"Poor girl!" said Podd, in a very low tone. "How

—if you don't mind my asking, Miss Frale, how did you happen to—to enter your—walk of life?"

"I was poor, and alone, and I wanted a piano."

"But—yes, I can see—that hunger for music—I see that. But—after you got the piano, why didn't you——?"

"I found I couldn't play it well enough to suit me. So I wanted a player-piano. Of course, those cost a great deal more."

"Yes, quite so. And yet—after you got your player-piano, you still——"

"Yes, because then I wanted a gramophone. Don't you see, Mr. Podd, how it was? Perhaps rich men are like that. They start with the idea of just making a hundred thousand. Maybe they say, 'If I could only get a hundred thousand, then I'd quit and do those things I want to do, and stop doing the things I hate to do.' But when they get the hundred thousand they find that it isn't anywhere near what they need, so they go on and on—I suppose it was like that."

"It may be so," said Mr. Podd thoughtfully. "At any rate, Miss Frale, you have rights, which the people on this ship are bound to respect. You were invited to join our party; you were guilty of no misrepresentation, and I shall see to it that you are not annoyed in any way. I should like to promise that this—er—prejudice will pass away. We are broad-minded people, I hope. I think all will be well."

"Thank you. I'm glad you don't think I misrepresented myself. In fact, Mr. Podd, you'll see in my letter that I answered your request that each candidate should state their walk of life. You'll see I stated mine, as nicely as I could."

"Did you?" asked Podd. He seized the letter again. Then, for the first time, he caught the import of the sentence:

"As for my walk of life, Mr. Podd, it has usually been on the right-hand side of Broadway, going downtown, between Twenty-third and Forty-second Streets."

VIII

THE first meeting of the Podd Pilgrims was a satisfying success. This is not to say that there were not moments when the main purpose was fogged in minor differences. It is not to claim that there were not dissonances. It is not to forget, indeed, that Master Freddie Tantruss, the boy who had been brought up exclusively on affirmations, insisted on bringing into the lounge the large Chinese gong which was used to summon the passengers to meals, and thumped upon it loudly and persistently, just when the speakers were putting their best oratorical feet forward.

Captain Rumble, who was present at the meeting, and had previously evicted Master Tantruss from the chart room and the wheelhouse, with sundry affirmations which Freddie had previously heard only from teamsters and icemen, roared at the first interruption that "that brat must be thrown out."

The sentiment was a just one; perhaps the choice of words was unfortunate. Mrs. Tantruss rose indignantly and asked Captain Rumble what he meant by calling her son a brat. Captain Rumble, a huge parcel of manhood, with an enormous round face, and a voice which matched his physique, bowed with stiff courtesy, and remarked that he begged the lady's pardon, but he felt in honor bound to declare that when he said brat, he meant brat. "And," he added, "if the young whelp does not keep out of my chart room, I'll have him in

irons. Yesterday he cut three pages of logarithms out of my almanac. The boy is a nuisance."

This gave Mrs. Tantruss an opportunity to speak, out of her turn. She appealed to Mr. Podd to choose between her and Captain Rumble as a pilgrim, then and there. She would try to do her part in creating the international commonwealth, by contributing her best thoughts on race welfare, new thought and child training, but she would not—she *would not* submit to have her son deprived of his right of expression. Every child had a yearning for self-expression. To curb this natural instinct was to make the child run in grooves, and become mediocre. Great minds were those which constantly overstepped the boundaries.

At this point Freddie broke in upon his mother's discourse with a powerful "Wong! Wong! Wong!"

Instantly all the pilgrims looked expectant and ready to see a reversal of form on the part of Mrs. Tantruss. But Mrs. Tantruss waited with a quiet smile until Freddie got tired of beating the gong and threw the beater across the room. The padded end of the beater hit Dr. Bodger on the forehead and lightly skipped onward to Miss Peebles, knocking off her eyeglasses.

"Well, I got enough of this bunk!" cried Freddie, jumping up and catapulting from the lounge. "This is nut stuff! Come on, Dostey!" he shouted back from the doorway. "Let's see you hoof it some more."

Master Tantruss and the deckhands had been edified to discover that Dostey's feet were extremely agile, and that he could do a wonderful buck-and-wing as neatly as a breakdown. This was what Master Tantruss meant by Dostey's "hoofing" it.

Nobody tried to detain Dostey, and when silence

was restored, Mr. Podd said, gently, "I feel strongly, Mrs. Tantruss, that some of your ideas as to the usual repression of children are correct. At the same time, would it not be possible to let Freddie express himself in one room, and let us express ourselves in another?"

"I wish Freddie always to feel that he is a free, living Part of the great Whole," said Mrs. Tantruss firmly.

At this moment, Captain Rumble jumped up and bawled, "Here, you swabs! What are you doing here! Out, I say! Get out!"

The Captain's eyes had been outraged by the appearance of a number of the crew, who came in and sat at the rear of the room. Captain Rumble's huge form surged down toward the supposed intruders, who sat as long as they considered hygienic, and then broke for safety.

"Wait, I beg you!" cried Mr. Podd, clutching the Captain's arm. "They are not intruding, Captain. I invited the crew to come."

"You invited them to come?" hoarsed out the bewildered Rumble. "You invited them to come? Them—them *deck-scrapers?* Them—*charwomen?*"

"Yes," said Mr. Podd. "Don't you see, Captain, that this is to be a forum? We want all minds, however humble their situation, to bear upon our problems? We are all working toward a state where the most menial work will be clothed with dignity. This poor lad, who scrubs the deck, would do it with a blithe spirit and an artisan's feeling for his work, because he will feel that he is fulfilling just as important and worthy office as the Captain, or the chief engineer, or the manager of a great factory."

"Not on my ship!" cried the Captain. "Mr. Podd, I don't wish to hurt your feelings, but I'm a man who has sailed, man and boy, under discipline. Discipline, I must have, on my ship. Good God, sir—do you understand what this will mean, if you let them loafing scums come in here and sit with us? You'll have a mutiny, sir—a mutiny! You won't have a seaman left—you'll have a bunch of shiftless sea-lawyers. You don't know 'em, Mr. Podd! Why, there ain't discipline enough left in the merchant marine, as it is, to swing a boat from the davits! Why, a master is helpless against these ruffians, sir! You got to kiss them and put them to bed and tuck 'em in and give 'em coffee and bring 'em their marmalade in bed, or they'll strike on you! If you knock 'em down, they'll make it cost you your ticket. Why, they—they won't even drink their gill of lime-juice nowadays. You can't make 'em. And it's the rules, Mr. Podd."

Captain Rumble, having roared this dissertation, went out to free himself of the rest of his pent-up emotion. Whereupon the Podd meeting proceeded. Mr. Podd was interrupted only a few times by certain skeptical utterances from Henry Waddick, who sat as far away as possible and viewed the whole proceeding with an ironical grin.

William Podd spoke from manuscript as follows:

"My good friends and fellow pilgrims. I am not going to take up the time by explaining the reasons which have brought us here. We all know, and we feel inspired by those reasons. We are on our way around the world, to serve as best we can the interests of a common brotherhood of the world's peoples, and to labor for a social state where the terrible abuses of

so-called government will be non-existent. I think I state the case as well as possible for all of us, so far as I can know your minds, that what the world needs is some form of communism. We may differ slightly as to the details of that Communistic State. But we foresee, do we not, that this State will embrace, to speak in the large, the following basic principles:

"1. Profit, rent and interest will be abolished. The goods produced by the workers—and all *will be* workers—will go into a common fund on which all may draw what is necessary for their comfort and happiness. It has been proved that all necessary goods, even luxuries, to supply all the people in the world, can be produced, if they were distributed equally, in *three hours work per day per person.* Mark that! That will give time for leisure, for culture, and for artistry, as William Morris pointed out in his excellent books.

"2. There will, of course, still be menial and unpleasant forms of work. These will perhaps be done by all in their turn, or they will be paid more highly—not in money, of course, for there will be no need for money—but in the services of others, in desirable luxuries, in holidays, scholarships, or whatever.

"3. There will be no crimes against property. How can there be crimes against property when there will be no private property, because each will have abundance from the common store? There will be differences of opinion, no doubt, but nothing that cannot be settled by the wisdom of good friends. Therefore, no police, and no courts. There will be a council, chosen by moot, who will decide all the few things necessary to decide for the common conduct. But

legislation, cumbrous and unjust, as we know it, will not be necessary.

"4. The arts will flourish. I will not go into this now, but we shall talk a good deal about it on our way to Australia."

"Australia!" cried all in unison, "are we going to Australia?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Podd, rubbing his hands in gleeful acknowledgment of the reception of his little surprise. "I kept this back for you all. We are going to Australia first, by way of the Cape of Good Hope, because we are informed that the greatest progress in political readjustment has been made in that noble land. You now see, I think, why I have chartered such a large ship. We might all have been easily accommodated on a large steam yacht, but I wanted to be sure of absolute safety and comfort, as we may meet with storms and other perils of the sea. But the Captain assured me that this is a staunch ship, so we need have no fear. I will now proceed:

"5. We shall abolish, in our Communistic State, all social classifications and castes. How foolish they will appear, then. Envy, pride, covetousness—what need further for those silly passions? Each man and woman will come singing to his work, knowing that work is for the common good, and that in doing such work, he or she belongs to the only nobility that will exist—the nobility of productive, progressive brotherhood."

"Rot!" commented Mr. Waddick, from the back of the room. "Rubbish!"

"My friend Waddick says 'rot' and 'rubbish.' He does not hurt my feelings, and I know he does not

intend to. Mr. Waddick is a conservative; and we are going to convert him to our way of thinking. We are glad to have him with us, although his coming was due to a regrettable accident—no longer regrettable, I should say."

Dr. George Bodger rose impressively, looked about him at the serious company, and drew a large manuscript from his pocket.

"Mr. Podd," said the doctor, with a clinical smile, "this is all very well, so far, and I have not a syllable to say against it. But you have said not a word about the great Canal."

"Because we are not going through the Canal," replied Podd. "As I said, doctor, we are going around the Cape of Good Hope."

The doctor was a trifle impatient in his tone. "I did not refer to the Suez Canal, or to the Panama Canal, or to the canals on Mars," he went on. "I referred to a canal of greater importance than those works of man. I referred to the alimentary canal."

Mr. Podd bowed agreeably. "I believe that will be taken care of in due time," he remarked. "I have asked the stewards to bring in sandwiches and cake at ten-thirty."

"That is just it!" cried the doctor. "Sandwiches and cake! Hog-meat, embalmed cow-flesh and indigestible carbo-hydrates! I have prepared a paper here which aims to show you, Mr. Podd, and to show the world, that there can be no Communistic State which rests on a foundation of gastro-intestinal disturbances caused by faulty diet." The doctor adjusted his *pince-nez* and unfolded the manuscript.

"If you will pardon me, doctor," said Mr. Podd, "I

think we shall be all greatly enlightened by your paper. But there is just one more subject on which I wish to touch before we go further. May I?"

Doctor Bodger frowned and yielded the floor to the nozzle manufacturer.

"It is this," said Mr. Podd, with strong feeling, "I think you will all agree with me, that in a little party like ours, we cannot afford many serious dissensions or cross-purposes. We want our progress to be a steady, upward curve. There has already arisen a little matter—I am sure it will be of no moment—which has put our breadth of mind and our liberality to the test. I refer—I refer to Miss Frale, who has wisely remained away from the meeting tonight, knowing that we should discuss her case. Miss Frale has been unfortunate in —in her choice of occupation. It is one of those economic crimes against humanity which follow in the wake of the capitalistic, property-owning system. There will be nothing of that sort, I trust, in a Communistic State. A little disagreement has arisen between Miss Frale and our accomplished sister, Mrs. Tantruss——"

"I refused to sit near her, and I still refuse," broke in Mrs. Tantruss. "I claim to be as broad-minded as anybody, yet there are some things at which I draw the line. I am a mother. I have my little Freddie to think of—when he shall become a man. I will not tolerate that person, Mr. Podd. She uses an abominable perfume, which I happen to know comes from Paris and costs seven dollars an ounce."

Mr. Podd was downcast. He looked around the room for aid and comfort. Nobody else besides Mrs. Tantruss seemed to take the matter seriously. Mr.

Podd, therefore, felt emboldened to ask Miss Peebles, the poetess, what she thought about it.

"I think exactly as you do," was the response from Miss Peebles. "One cannot afford to have these conventional, mid-Victorian prejudices. I thank Nature that I can truthfully say I am free from them. We want a real brotherhood, of all people, of all kinds, of all thought, of all walks of life. We cannot afford to condemn or ostracize any person or class."

"Exactly my idea," said Mr. Podd, rejoicing. "We include in our brotherhood the whole race—saints and sinners, bakers and butchers and candle-stick makers, Indians, Chinese, negroes——"

"Oh, no! Not negroes! I couldn't go as far as that!" cried Miss Peebles, in shrill alarm. "With that exception, I go as far as anybody. But you must remember that I am from Memphis, Tennessee. Our people, you know, realize those things better than you Northerners. We have lived with the negroes. Oh, goodness, no! I really must except black people!"

Mr. Podd staggered back and sat down limply.

"Yes, you're so free from prejudice, you are!" shot over Mrs. Tantruss, with a victorious jingle in her mirthful laugh. "Who's mid-Victorian now? I suppose I am!"

"You're more prejudiced than I am, because you have a bias against people of your own color," returned the poetess. Mrs. Tantruss rose threateningly; whether with any intent to make a joust of it was not to be discovered, for the Rev. Joseph Loasby, who felt himself more or less the friend and ally of both ladies, interposed.

"We have an unwritten doctrine in our church,"

he said, "looking appealingly at both Miss Peebles and Mrs. Tantruss, "which says that one should not become unduly excited concerning matters which are not susceptible of scientific proof. For this reason, we Unitarians do not speak in our meeting houses against any other sect or against any dogma. We feel that this would be attacking wind-mills after the fashion of Don Quixote. Mrs. Tantruss and Miss Peebles each cling to a belief, which is more or less subconscious with them; one, that conventional virtue is superior to unvirtue; and the other, that the white race is superior to the black——"

"As it is!" said Miss Peebles.

"Possibly. I am inclined to that way of thinking, myself, being white. But neither of these *theses* can be proved scientifically. Now, if in another eon of time——"

"Do you know what you are talking about?" shouted Mr. Waddick, from his position in the scoffer's seat. "If you do, draw a diagram of it! It sounds like rubbish to me!"

Miss Peebles and Mrs. Tantruss turned upon Mr. Waddick with a concerted ferocity. They forgot their differences under the stress of this grossness on the part of the Grape City man, directed against a person who, after all, was entitled to wear—even if he chose not to—the garments of sanctified instruction.

"Perhaps if you had spent less time weighing sugar and counting beans, you'd know more about what this gentleman is saying," said Miss Peebles, whose contempt for grocers and other tradesmen was so great that she had barely been able to make her own small

purchases at the shops in Memphis and Greenwich village.

"Mr. Loasby is speaking in a language not commonly employed in a general store," remarked Mrs. Tantruss, crushingly. "If you really want to know, Mr. Waddick, he has just uttered a profound truth, which ought to be put into a book."

Mr. Loasby, who did not know exactly what the profound truth was, which he had uttered, because he had been interrupted just as he was approaching the nub of his argument, looked modestly deprecatory, and rolled his eyes.

Mr. Waddick, who might have joined issue with one lady, and even hurled defiance at all the men present, wisely refrained from being drawn into an argument with *two* ladies, especially since both of them had shown such willingness to hit any exposed spot of their opponent. So he groaned sardonically, and subsided.

The meeting adjourned at midnight. Mr. Podd felt that a real start had been made. Willa Podd threw her sweater-coat loosely over her shoulders and went out on deck, where an elderly moon, shrunken but gayly clothed in deep orange, was just showing above the purple horizon. Podd's secretary, Neale, looked about furtively, and followed Miss Podd out.

IX

When Willa Podd saw Albert Neale approaching her, with a deliberation and evident purpose characteristic of the man, she felt deeply troubled. The moment which she had feared, the moment of which she had apprised her father of the certainty, had come; and whatever decisions she had made about it, she now felt unsteady and unsure.

In the first place Willa really liked and esteemed Albert Neale. She shuddered at the idea of hurting a man who was such a loyal and tireless assistant of her father. She knew that Neale regarded William Podd as a superman, almost (not to speak profanely) as a lesser deity; she knew that Neale, who had been with the Podd Company since its early and wabbly days, would have cheerfully seen his own fortunes wrecked if thereby he could have saved the organization for which he had such blind faith and affection.

Not only this: Willa Podd knew also how much Neale's knowledge and help meant to her father, who himself had worked his mind and body to the point where his energy needed the support of such a subordinate. It flashed across the young woman that if she should hurt Neale too deeply; if she should seem to snub his aspirations; it might so react upon this serious man as to cripple his efforts for her father. So, it was not so easy to rebuff Neale as she had lightly considered.

And yet, of all the men she had ever seen, the one she felt least like marrying was this same Albert G. Neale. As a husband, she thought he would be deadly. He had no humor; so far as she knew he had never read a book, unless of a technical nature; scarcely even read a newspaper, except the commercial section; played no game, and indulged in no pastime she had ever heard of; and on his infrequent appearance at the theatre invariably gave it as his opinion that actors should be set at work doing something worth while. He lived business, ate business, slept business, and talked business. For her, with her love of life, her natural sporting instincts, her yearning for colorful, gay things, and her inclination for chatter, it would be a living death. But—Neale was approaching her, and she realized in a flash that he had been steadily approaching her for the past two years, inoffensively but persistently, and for the first time she realized, too, what really serious thought she had given him. She wondered whether, at the last moment, she could stand against that powerful, slow abrasive quality which had worn away so many business obstructions, and made Neale second in command.

She heard him speaking now, slowly and softly, yet unerringly.

"I've wanted to have a chance to talk with you, when we could be alone, Miss Podd," he was saying. "I hope I'm not intruding——"

There was no familiarity in this to resent. Neale had been so much with the Podds, so close to the little family circle since Willa was a little girl, that she could hardly have blamed him if he had called her by her given name.

The young woman leaned upon the rising moon for support. "Look at that, Mr. Neale!" she exclaimed, pointing at her refuge. "One never sees the moon that way on shore, does one? How different it seems, rising over the black waters!"

"I saw it just that way, in Poddville, once," replied Neale, who was too honest to forget anything. "It was one night when your father and I had been at the office late—the night he decided to build the warehouse in Salt Lake City to take care of the intermountain trade."

A cold shiver passed down the spine of the young woman. A husband who looked at the glorious moon and was reminded merely of a large brick building in Utah! Instantly she felt sorry for Neale; and then she girded herself against that feeling, for she knew that people got into difficulty by feeling too sorry for other people. She had heard of women who had six children, or more, on no better basis than having felt sorry for some man, and not having wished to hurt his feelings.

"This matter I wanted to speak with you about——" began Neale again.

"Is it really important tonight?" she fenced. "Because, I feel a bit tired, and I just wanted to take a few long breaths out here and then go below."

"It *is* important," said Neale. "If it were just important to myself, I shouldn't think of bothering you about it. But it is important, it seems to me, not only to me but to your father and you."

There it was! Just as she had told her father! Neale was going to ask her to marry him, not on personal grounds, but for the good of the Podd organi-

zation. What a ghastly sort of mind the man had! He would sacrifice himself for the Podd Company; therefore, he saw no reason why she shouldn't be willing to sink any trifling matters of the heart for the same reason.

"As you know," went on Neale, the relations between your father and me are very pleasant, and have always been. Not that we don't have our differences of opinion. Naturally, we do. I was for getting rid of our London manager and his whole force, and putting in new blood. Our gross business in the British Isles has fallen off $2,546,000 since the high-water mark of 1917——"

"O, please!" cried the young woman.

Neale apologized. "I'm sorry to bore you with the exact figures," he said. "Of course you would only be interested in round numbers. The point is, your father differed with me. He lets his heart run away with his judgment now and then. Your father being the chief, naturally, I submitted. But I state this merely to show that we do have our differences."

"Yes, yes," came back impatiently. "Naturally."

"Well, Miss Podd, as I say, our relations are very pleasant. I hope they will never be otherwise. So I come to you—because—I don't find words very readily to tell what is in my mind—I shouldn't want anything to come between your father and me—and yet there is a hope that I have been carrying with me for a long time—that some day——"

"You needn't go on," interrupted the girl, in an agonized tone. "I know what it is. I understand."

"You know? You understand?" gasped Neale, in

real amazement. "I have never said a word to anybody——"

"No, I know that. But I see a great many things around me which I'm not supposed to know the meaning of."

"I know you have your father's wonderful insight," said Neale, admiringly. "But I didn't think you'd know—or guess—what I was going to propose——"

"I do. I respect your feelings on that subject, Mr. Neale; I really do. If there is anything I can do to help you forward in a business way, with my father, I'll never let a chance go by—and I mean that!"

"Oh, that's wonderfully good of you——"

"I mean it." Willa paused. She was standing with her back against the wall, she felt. If she could only be able to say to this decent man something which would settle the matter for good and all, and forbid him ever to hurt himself against the same stone-wall again! If she was able to say to him frankly—for he deserved frankness—"Mr. Neale, I am deeply in love with so-and-so, and I shall probably marry him!"

At that moment a wicked notion entered her head. Why not invent a prospective husband for herself, someone who would never be hurt by the invention? Neale, she was sure, would never lisp a word of anything she told him in confidence. And almost without knowing why or how, she found herself saying:

"You have given me your confidence, Mr. Neale, and I am going to return the compliment. I know that you will never tell a living soul what I am going to tell you now—until events naturally release you from your promise."

Neale promised gravely.

"I shall probably be married not long after our cruise is ended," Willa galloped on recklessly, some imp of roguery putting the words into her mouth as she went on. "I can trust you I know. Since coming on board I have met a man—Mr. Pickbill——"

Neale started violently. *"Him!"* he exclaimed, unguardedly. Then he said immediately, "I'm sorry. I—I was surprised."

"I know what you think," went on Willa. "I suppose he is all that a successful business man would despise. But—well, I cannot say any more. A woman never has any good reasons—I mean that would seem good discussed in a conference——"

She looked at Neale out of the corner of her eyes, as she stood alongside him, both leaning on the bulwarks, with elbows on the top iron. He was staring down into the water, where a million tiny gleams of yellow light danced in the white foam as *The Future* slipped along through the night.

"I may speak with you again, privately?" asked Neale.

"Certainly," she replied; and she felt kindlier toward this man who could take the blow head-up and unwhimpering. She impulsively patted the secretary on the shoulder, said "good-night" cheerily, and was gone.

Mr. Neale remained a moment. Then turned to go in, saying softly:

"Pickbill! Well, I'll be damned!"

X

THE second officer, Mr. Waters, remarked to the chief engineer, Mr. Adair, that Captain Rumble was getting thinner.

It did seem that Captain Rumble was a trifle less corpulent than when he left New York, though everyone had remarked upon his capacity for and enjoyment of his meals. What was certain was, that Captain Rumble had a preoccupied and worried air. This was not habitual with him, according to those who had sailed with him before.

It was not exactly that the captain roared less, or strutted the bridge with less emphatic feet. But his roaring had gone into a hectic key, and his feet had hesitant moments.

The truth was that Captain Rumble *was* worried, and did not know precisely why. He had forebodings, which might have driven him to drink if one of the stipulations of the charterer of *The Future* had not been that grape-juice was to be the most active stimulant allowed on board. The captain could not get used to his freight. He tried manfully to understand why the pilgrims were there, what they meant when they talked, and what they meant to do when they ceased to talk, if such an event could be counted on.

So far as Mr. Podd was concerned, the captain was at ease. He liked Podd. He didn't understand what Podd was trying to do, but he liked him well enough

not to care. He was also smitten, in an innocent and distant way, with Willa Podd. He brightened up immeasurably when she was near. Dostey was easily understood. So was Freddie Tantruss. Mr. Waddick was something new in the captain's life, but still fairly lucid, and particularly so when most vehement. The captain had spent most of his time with vehement men.

But the rest of the pilgrims annoyed, astounded and troubled the master of *The Future*. And particularly Miss Peebles.

It was the morning of the sixth day when Captain Rumble waited upon Mr. Podd, and asked the leader of the pilgrims whether he might have a few words with him privately, in the captain's room. "And perhaps Miss Podd would like to come along, too," suggested the captain. "She would no doubt be interested in what I have to say."

When they had seated themselves in the two chairs which the captain put out for them, the master began.

"I don't want you to feel alarmed," he said. "but we fouled a piece of sunken wreckage last night, and we've lost a propeller blade." Mr. Podd started a little, and Miss Podd leaned forward and fixed her eyes on the captain.

"I didn't feel anything," said Mr. Podd, "Did you, Will?"

"No, you were asleep, and it didn't make much of a jar," supplied Rumble. "I didn't realize what had happened, myself, till I saw we had slowed down. It won't be much of a job to put in a spare blade, even in these days, when you can't get the old hands who made nothing of bigger jobs than that. But the help being what it is, Mr. Podd, I'm changing our course

a bit, with the idea of running alongside an island on the extreme east of the Windward group, where I touched once years ago, and where there's a pretty little harbor, where we can run into shoal water and work handier. It really isn't necessary to do it, but I thought possibly your friends might like to have the little change, and go ashore in the sub-tropics, before we start our long run through the South Atlantic."

"It's a splendid idea, Captain, I think," said Willa, just as her father nodded his approbation. "Is the island inhabited, Captain?"

"No. Only some niggers live there. But there's no danger from them. We should be there by ten thirty tomorrow morning. I want to give you a word of warning. The water in the cove will look very inviting, and your party will probably want to take a swim. You'd better not. As I remember it, that place is infested with sharks, big man-eaters, who would make about one mouthful of a person."

The captain closed one eye reflectively. "Of course," he added, "if that Tantruss boy wants to try a little swim, I shouldn't have any objection."

"Oh, heavens, no!" ejaculated Mr. Podd, shuddering; but Willa, who knew better than to take the captain seriously on this point, laughed softly. "Perhaps Freddie will improve with age, Captain," she suggested.

"If he was to be turned over to me, I could improve him," Rumble murmured. "If he goes on the way he's headed, he'll do us all in, some way."

Captain Rumble folded his hands across his middle promontory, and sighed. Then he proceeded:

"Another thing I don't fancy, Mr. Podd, is having

a poet on board. I don't incline toward these old-woman superstitions; and yet you can't deny that some things bring no good to a ship. One of them is poets. I speak from personal knowledge."

"I didn't know about that," replied Mr. Podd, absently.

"Probably not. But I do. I lost a ship off Ushant once, on account of having a poet aboard, and him reading his poetry in the dining saloon. If I'd known it in time, I could have stopped it, but there was heavy weather and I was on the bridge. A few hours afterward we struck. Most of the passengers went down, but this poet was saved. That's the way of it. Poets can drown a whole shipload of folks, but I've never known one to sink. If you was to take away their life-belt, they'd float ashore. That's what makes it look bad. It's a sign they're not in league with good influences."

"You don't tell me?" gasped Mr. Podd.

"Yes. Another time I was a passenger, coming back from the East, on a Bibby liner. There was a poet aboard, and I knew trouble would come. But before anything serious could happen the poet disappeared. During the night. Nobody knew where he went to. But I fancy the crew could tell. You can't blame 'em, Mr. Podd. They're men with families at home, unprovided for mostly, and they're not going to lose their lives just so one man or woman can write poetry. As soon as a poet begins to spout poetry on board a ship, it isn't long before the poet disappears. I don't favor that sort of thing, but so it is. This Miss Peebles—"

"You don't mean to tell me that the crew would

throw her overboard—murder her in cold blood?" cried Mr. Podd, with blanched cheeks.

"Well, replied the captain, comfortably, "there was the case of Jonah. Now most people favor Jonah and take sides against the sailors. But what is the truth about it, sir? This Jonah had been bragging to the sailors on board that ship that he was a sort of absconder, was running away from somebody, and when the storms began to rage, it looked like he was the cause of it. He dared 'em to chuck him over, thinking they wouldn't; but they did, and I for one don't hold them responsible. The first rule of the sea is the safety of the ship. I suggest this to you, Mr. Podd for what it is worth. Personally, I am not a superstitious man. There are things I would and would not do, to be on the safe side, but I am above superstition in general. However, without making too much of a damaged propeller, I'm afraid there may be some connection."

"But—but Miss Peebles is a harmless lady, who is working for the good of humanity, and I'm sure there can be no harm in her poetry, Captain. Why, the idea is absurd. It is medieval. I don't know what to say. I shall have to think it over."

Mr. Podd went out of the room depressed. Willa remained behind. She said to the captain, "Really, you ought to be ashamed to tell my father such whoppers as that. Why, it's ridiculous. You don't dare look me in the eye and tell me that you lost a ship off Ushant because there was a poet aboard. Look me in the eye, Captain Rumble! Now, sir, did you?"

"Well, I almost did," growled the captain, obeying like a gentleman. "We had a northwest gale that

pounded us so as to shear off the rivets in our forecastle plates. I think it due to that poet."

"But they *don't* throw poets overboard, now, do they? Tell me the truth, Captain," Willa shook a finger at the large man, who became strangely mollified, and beamed upon her.

"I stretched it a little," answered Rumble. "I dare say they would only conceal them somewhere in the hold till the end of the voyage. But miss, let me tell you that I'm afraid of that Miss Peebles! Believe me, poets are unlucky on board ship. I am quite serious there, and between you and me, I am afraid something will come of it."

"But Miss Peebles isn't a poet," said Willa.

"She isn't? Oh, yes, she is. I heard her."

"You may have heard her read something, but it wasn't poetry. Miss Peebles only thinks she is a poet. She never wrote poetry in her life. So she can't do any damage, can she, now?"

Captain Rumble rolled his huge head from side to side, which was his way of thinking. Then he said rising:

"Of course, if that stuff isn't poetry, that will help. But it's still bad enough. She tries to write poetry, or she thinks she writes poetry, and that is likely to cause trouble, though maybe not so fatal. I'll ask the boatswain about it. He's a Norway squarehead, and those people are especially gloomy and helpful when you want to know about tragedies of any kind."

XI

ALL the following morning, after breakfast, the Podd pilgrims strained their eyes in the direction toward which *The Future* was headed, with as much eagerness as though they had been reaching the goal of a long journey instead of really just beginning one. The sun beat down upon the decks, and raised a tarry odor from the seams; and it was gloriously agreeable in the shade of the white awnings, forward. The never-failing morning breeze, in that vicinity, whipped a few lacy caps here and there in the dark-blue water. Never, the pilgrims agreed, had they felt such serenity of body and mind.

"There it is! I see land!" cried some deeply imaginative pilgrim, once in a while. They saw land long before land was visible. The heat waves, dancing along the horizon, conjured up a thousand mirages, of green isles and palms, and sandy beaches.

But, at length, land was really in sight. First it was a low-lying, yellow mirage, like all the rest; then a white-crested line, where the sea was methodically breaking on the island's eastward point. Not long afterward the ship glided into a little natural harbor, and anchored in a few fathoms of water which was so crystalline that the pilgrims, staring over the ship's side, looked down in ecstasy upon a marine garden, where grew lettuce and cabbages and cucumbers and giant pumpkins and fringed chicory, and plants with

thousands of streamers, like a school-girl's uncut hair, —and through these gardens were flashing hundreds of rainbow-colored fish, with other vaguer floundering forms of under-sea creatures.

No sharks were to be seen, but the pilgrims were willing to concede Captain Rumble's superior knowledge, and kept their feet dry and their skins intact by remaining on *The Future's* deck. There was much to look at beside the wonderful submarine gardens. On the shore a slow-moving party of black men could be seen getting ready to launch a boat. Behind the beach rose a number of stately palms, smooth trunked and reaching high, to flower at last in a great whorl of foliage. The trunks seemed to spring from the very beach sand itself. Then, behind these, there appeared an impenetrable thicket of tangled dwarf palms and scrubby growth.

After a good deal of seemingly aimless activity, the black men succeeded in pushing the craft into the water, and it came slowly toward *The Future.* As it came nearly alongside, the pilgrims saw that it was a crazy and dilapidated specimen of Gloucester fisherman's dory, rowed by four stalwart and underclothed negroes with rudely improvised oars. In the stern, at the tiller, sat another negro, as black as the rest, but somewhat over-dressed, it seemed, for that climate. He wore on his head a light-colored felt hat, very jauntily angled over one ear. He had no shirt, it appeared, but wore what was otherwise, in the best circles, a correct morning-suit of black cutaway coat and striped trousers. He had no shoes. But he wore a waistcoat of black silk, flowered delicately with a handworked design.

As the dory neared *The Future,* the negro at the

tiller gave that instrument a clever twist and brought himself alongside, where four black hands clutched at the ship's plates and held it fast. The negro in the stern rose and bowed politely to the faces which were looking down upon him and his companions. Then he made signs as though he wished a rope ladder to come down.

"Would it be all right to have him come aboard?" asked Mr. Podd of Captain Rumble, who was shaking his huge sides with laughter at the sight of the Chesterfieldian negro in the dory.

"Why, of course, if you want him," replied the captain. Accordingly the pilot's ladder was lowered, and the negro came up with graceful nimbleness, leaping over the bulwark by placing one hand upon the top, and then pulling off his fedora hat and making a courteous bow to the wondering Podd party.

Mr. Podd, as befitted a man who wanted to embrace all races and colors and conditions of men in a lasting and affectionate brotherhood, was the first to step forward with outstretched hand. Miss Peebles, late of Memphis, Tennessee, who could not bear the sight of this degradation of the white race, shrieked and hurried below to her cabin.

"Allee samee glad to see you," ventured Mr. Podd, slightly mixing his dialect with the Chinese by mistake. "We velly friendly white people from United States—you savvy?—way up North, stop here say hello to black folks, savvy? Glad to see you!"

The negro received this greeting, and touched the ends of Mr. Podd's fingers with his own. Then he said, in a baritone voice of real quality, and in the most impeccable English, "I am extremely glad to see

you all. I welcome you to my humble abode. I am, as you might say, the king, or petty potentate of this isle. I do not magnify the importance of my position, I assure you, but such as it is, I feel it incumbent upon me to offer you a hearty welcome."

"You—you speak wonderfully!" cried Mr. Podd. "Where did you learn it? It is marvelous."

"I was a Pullman porter on the New York Central Railroad," replied the king, "until I went down to Alabama to matriculate at Tuskeegee College. As you no doubt know, this is the college founded by the late Booker T. Washington. And *this,*" he added, looking at his garments ruefully, "is all I have left of my graduation clothes. My boots were stolen by some disreputable white sponge-fishermen who landed on my little island; and they would no doubt have taken my clothes also, if I had not had the forethought to be sleeping in them, that night, after a banquet. My shirts have quite worn out. I am sorry to make such an uncouth appearance before you, but you will take my good volition for granted, I trust."

"But how in the world did you come to be here?" asked Willa Podd, gazing upon the well-made black figure compassionately.

"I will tell you, Missy," was the reply, "very briefly. In Tuskeegee I studied with an eye toward the ministry. But as there were too many ministers already for the congregations, I found that it would be some time before I could get a charge, so I was advised to do missionary work in these islands of the West Indies, until a suitable place should fall vacant. A Boston lady, Mrs. Adams Carver Brattle, a lady very well known for her interest in the welfare of benighted

folks, sent for me and asked me to come to this island and work with the people. She had me landed here, and was to have sent me supplies from time to time, but since then I have not heard from her, and have heard *about* her only accidentally. A sailing ship captain from Boston, who touched here, told me that Mrs. Brattle had become interested in the heathen of New Guinea. I suppose I ought not to blame her for that; no doubt the heathen of New Guinea are quite as worthy as the islanders here. In fact," he added, thoughtfully, "I should hope they are." He looked troubled for a moment. Then he shook himself free from his thoughts and proceeded:

"At all events, it would have been better for me if Mrs. Brattle had changed her philanthropy *after* giving me notice, and sending me a ticket for the States. But —I am not blaming her. Here I am. The people here wanted a king, because they said they had got sick of their democratic form of government, where everyone was as good as anybody else. They said it wasn't interesting enough. So, as I had the only clothing on the island, and this hat, I was made king. I have had nothing but trouble since. You see we have a population of only 165 souls, and the 45 men all want to be dukes or members of the court. In fact, we have only royalty here; no common people at all. But there is always dissension as to whether a duke beats a baron, and whether a baroness should come into my presence ahead of a countess. I have to settle these questions. It is very wearying—and somewhat dangerous."

"Is there anything I could do for you," asked Mr. Podd, sympathetically.

"You are not on your way to the United States?"

"No, we are going to Australia."

The king looked terribly disappointed. "All the ships touch here outward bound, it seems," he said dolefully. "I don't suppose I'll ever get away. But if you could let me have a black suit of clothes, and a shirt or two with some linen collars, it would save me my kingdom, later on. Because, you see, sir, when this suit of clothes wears out, I shall be no better than any of the rest of them. There are plenty of men here who weigh as much as I do, and have just as broad shoulders, and can sing as well. The only thing that keeps me from being deposed is my clothes."

"I think I can fit you out splendidly," replied Mr. Podd. "That is, if you are not too large."

"A little tightness makes no difference. Some people think it more swagger," said the king. "I thank you. Now, I am wondering if you will accept an invitation to dinner with us, this afternoon at turtle-waking. You see, we have no watches—my subjects broke my watch by listening to it tick so much —so we figure dinner time by the hour the turtles rise from their siesta on the beach."

Mr. Podd looked around at the pilgrims. "I think I can accept your kind invitation in the name of all present," he said.

"You can!" shouted all the party.

"You must not expect too much in the way of a collation," warned the king. "We live very simply, perforce. Mostly on nuts, fruits, and green leaves."

Dr. George Bodger leaped forward with outstretched hand. "My dear sir!" he exclaimed, "I honor you and your people. You have brains! You will survive

when all these self-poisoned white people have perished. You have no colitis, I wager."

"No, you can say it for my people that they bathe freely," was the reply. "Colitis" was one of the few words the king did not know, and he assumed that it meant something even less pleasant than Dr. Bodger intended.

That afternoon all the pilgrims, with the exception of Miss Peebles and Master Tantruss went ashore in one of the ship's boats. They were met at the beach by King Thomas Jefferson Culpepper I. (for that was the name of the black sovereign), and escorted with much show of dignity, if with very little show of clothing, to the banquet hall.

The banquet hall proved to be a well-ventilated spot under two banana-palms, and the tables, though they were but mats of dried palm fronds, overlapped one upon another, were heaped with a profusion of the best the island afforded—fruits predominating. Plantains, mangoes, guavas, oranges, little wooden bowls full of the unripe flesh of freshly opened cocoanuts, were mingled with uncooked vegetables in a manner which gladdened the eye and loosened the tongue of Dr. George Bodger, who stood for a long time rubbing his hands together in professional glee.

"Not a single animal proteid!" he sighed, contentedly.

But Mr. Podd, as was his wont, was more alert to the humanities than to food. His quick eyes observed that there were two tables spread, and already the blacks were taking their places silently around one of them, leaving the other obviously for the white party.

Mr. Podd was touched. He took King Culpepper aside and whispered to him:

"I honor your delicacy of feeling, my dear sir, but you are wrong about us—quite wrong. We are not the kind of people who shun others because of the color of their skins. We aim to preach brotherhood around the world, and it is a brotherhood without exceptions. Please have one great family table made of the two. It will please us."

King Culpepper looked embarrassed. He darted a glance upon his black nobility, and then another upon the Podd party. "I—I feel rather foolish to have to say it, Mr. Podd," said the king, "and your sentiments are very fine—but—er—you see the reason I had two tables was because my black people have a silly notion that they are—how shall I say it?—superior to white folks. My subjects say that the white man is perfectly all right in his own place, and capable of a good deal of development, under the right influence, but they do not think he has yet reached the point where it would be good policy to regard him as an equal. I beg you won't think those are my sentiments, Mr. Podd. I realize that you white folks are just as good as I am, every bit. I have to say, of course, that I think the black man is superior in the great element of enjoyment of life, which I assume is what we are here on earth for, in part; but on the whole the white man has his little points of superiority, too. I don't like these prejudices any better than you do. But we may as well humor my subjects, I suppose, may we not?"

"I suppose so," replied Mr. Podd, weakly.

While the dinner was in progress—and the Podd pilgrims did full justice to the luscious fresh fruits

and the bowls of coconut-milk—the king, who sat on the right hand of Mr. Podd, at the white-party's table, this being an especial dispensation to show the fair-mindedness of the islanders, leaned over and said in a low tone:

"My people have planned a little entertainment to take place after dinner, Mr. Podd. Probably you know that we blacks are very fond of dramatics. We love acting. We also love burlesque. I do hope that your party will not be offended by anything said or done during the show. It will not be meant to hurt, I assure you. Only to amuse."

"Oh, don't be the least afraid of that," replied Mr. Podd.

"It will be in the nature of a minstrel show," said the king, with a touch of pride. "We do that sort of thing rather well."

The dinner having been finished, the tables and refuse were removed by the nobility—there being none but nobility to perform the operation. It was done, however, by the ladies of the nobility, for the dukes and viscounts and barons had all pulled out calabash pipes and lighted up, reclining on the ground in postures that were free from pose. Then the performers came.

The Podd party was amazed and a little frightened at first sight of the minstrels of the realm. They looked uncanny as they emerged from a nearby thicket, bringing stools with them, and native musical instruments. Each minstrel was painted white, on all that part of his anatomy which was visible—which is to say, about fifteen-sixteenths of his person. Each wore a yellow wig, made from a sort of combed sisal, or wild hemp. They ranged themselves in a bank, three

files deep, with a sort of interlocutor, or head minstrel in the middle, and three clown minstrels on either side.

Mr. Podd and his friends felt that the performance was strangely reminiscent of something they had seen before, when the head-minstrel arose and muttered a few gutteral words, and instantly a chorus of voices rang in the air. As the negroes spoke a dialect which had been brought from Africa, and to which they had reverted when they were left on the island, the king had to translate the songs and discourse.

The voices of the negroes were superb; resonant, untrained, unstultified. But when they spoke, in imitation of white men, the effect was not so pleasant. They caught, with too accurate mimicry, the harshness and monotonous tone of the white man's speech; and hissed and spit and bit their words when they did not mouth them in an unintelligible way.

Most of the minstrel jokes bore upon the white man's inability to enjoy life; upon his inability to enact himself, without wondering what other people were thinking of him; upon the white man's tendency toward hypocrisy; and upon his ceaseless treadmill habit of acquiring money—with which to disrupt the life of someone else of his family.

The Podd party, on hearing these things translated, did not laugh very heartily.

When the performance was over, Mr. Podd, speaking for the pilgrims, made a long and excellent speech of acknowledgment, which the islanders did not understand, and then formally presented to the King a copy of his book. Various presents were distributed, mutually, and soon afterward the pilgrims were back upon the ship.

Before the sun set, *The Future* weighed anchor and slowly nosed her way out of the harbor. Mr. Podd and Willa stood for a long time, silently, upon the bridge, watching the black figures on the shore recede into the swallowing background. Mr. Podd touched his daughter on the arm and said, softly, "I believe the king is waving to us still. I think they are all there waving us good-bye. How affecting, Will!"

Miss Podd grasped her father's hand tenderly. But she said nothing. She had the telescope, and she had seen the king, on the beach, dismembering Mr. Podd's book and handing each one of his subjects a page from it.

XII

On the morning of the twenty-eighth of November, a day which Mr. Podd was never to forget, the nozzle manufacturer was sitting in his room, at his desk, drafting out a tentative plan for the ideal Communistic State, when there was a stout and hurried knock at the door. Without waiting to be bidden, Captain Rumble propelled his great bulk within the room, and sat down, breathing hard. The expression on the captain's face indicated that his errand was a serious one.

"Mr. Podd," began Rumble, speaking for once in a subdued vein, and more quickly than was his habit, "I wish you would tell me all you know about this man Fink, one of your party."

"Why, I know nothing more about him than that he was accepted as one of the pilgrims, and that he has been an organizer of the unionized carpenters in Ohio," replied Mr. Podd. "What is the matter, Captain? Nothing serious has happened to him, I hope?"

"To him? No. I wish it had," growled the big man. "I have to inform you, Mr. Podd, that your huggermuggering with my crew—begging your pardon for the words, but that is the truth of it, sir—looks to be about to cause us some trouble. I warned you, sir, that you can't handle a crowd of seamen and oilers and such swine, on any such lawn-party basis. I pointed this out to you, sir. Now this man Fink, you'll have noticed, has not been attending your meet-

ings lately, but has been spending all his time with the crew. You'll have observed that he hasn't been eating or sleeping with the rest of the party."

"Oh, but that's his choice—and perhaps it does him credit—" interrupted Mr. Podd, with a benevolent smile of understanding.

"I'll ask you to hear me through, sir," retorted the captain, with unusual severity toward his employer. "This is no laughing matter. I say this man Fink has been spending his time with the crew, holding meetings forward, and taking ballots and that sort of thing. You say he is an organizer. That is right. He has succeeded in organizing the men on this ship, and as a result of it, the lives of your party, and myself and my officers, and the safety of this, are at this moment in the hands of that gang of ruffians."

"What—what do you mean?" asked Mr. Podd, paling. "You can't be serious."

"I mean sir, that I have just been waited on by a committee of three of the crew, who tell me that they have taken possession of the ship in the name of the—what the hell do you call it—the proleterriers, or something and that I am to change the course of the ship for Petrograd, where it will be turned over to the Soviet government."

Mr. Podd looked incredulous. "Oh, that must be a joke, captain," he ventured. "Surely a hoax of some sort."

Captain Rumble rose and looked down darkly into the face of the manufacturer. "As for me, sir, I don't joke, on board my ship. If I had had a pistol in my hand, sir, I would have shot those three curs in their tracks! That is how serious it is!"

"Thank God you had no pistol!" breathed Mr. Podd, fervently, aroused to the situation at last, but a pacifist always.

"You may thank God for what you please. I tell you I would have shot them like dogs. But I had no pistol. Do you know why? Because my room was entered some time yesterday, and my pistols and cartridges stolen. My officers' weapons have been stolen likewise. We are in the hands of those men, Mr. Podd."

"I'm sure they mean no harm," insisted Mr. Podd. "It is serious, I realize. But—in case there should be trouble—and I can't believe it— we can call by wireless—"

"Both wireless sets have been ruined by your friends," interrupted the captain, hoarsely. "Even the antennae have been cut. They have made a nice clean job of it. The wireless operators tell me that they cannot repair the apparatus. Therefore we cannot call for help. I am informed that practically the whole of the crew is in this conspiracy, this mutiny. There are a few faint-hearted ones who haven't the stomach for it, but they don't dare call their souls their own. That man Fink and an ordinary seaman named Potchkin, have got them frightened to death. The fact is, sir, that we have shipped a crew of Roosian blackguards, who probably had this thing plotted before they came aboard. This man Fink was in the plot, without a doubt. There is only one thing for me to do, Mr. Podd, under the circumstances. We must make the best fight we can, with whatever weapons we can find. I—I shall never—"

The captain could get no farther. His head suffused with blood, fell forward till his chin touched his chest, and Mr. Podd feared for a moment that he had suffered a stroke, until he observed that the great figure was shaking with stifled sobs.

"Please don't lose heart, captain," cried Podd, touching Rumble on the shoulder. "I'll see these men. They must realize that I am their friend. I'll talk with them —and I'm sure—"

"You needn't go to them," said the captain, as Mr. Podd started for the door. "They'll come to you. They'll be here soon. They'll—" Suddenly Captain Rumble smote the desk with his mighty fist. "By the living God, sir, I'll never submit to this! They can kill me, but I'll not work this ship for a crowd of pirates! I'll—"

The door opened quickly, and the figures of three men appeared in the doorway. Two of the men were of average size. The third was a blond giant, as tall as Rumble himself, but seemingly much taller, in that he had the build of a panther. A great shock of uncombed yellow hair frowsed over his head. He had steely blue eyes, high cheek bones, and the flattened nose of a Tartar. His teeth which showed fully when he spoke, were yellow and dog-like. But for all that, there was something about his face which was good-natured and almost boyishly friendly. This was Potchkin.

Potchkin was a natural leader. The other two men hung upon his words, and looked into his face when he spoke, like hounds waiting for the command of a master. And Potchkin spoke excellent English.

"Comrade Rumble has told you, hasn't he, Mr. Podd?" was the salutation from the Russian sailor.

"*Comrade* be damned!" shouted the captain, incontrollably. "*Captain* Rumble, you scum!"

"*Late* captain," was the steady, even reply, without a trace of offense. "There is no captain now. The ship is in the hands of a committee. As for your anger, Comrade Rumble, that is natural, and we do not blame you. Comrade Podd, I see that the angry comrade has told you. You must not feel alarmed. We mean no harm to you or your party. We mean no harm to Comrade Rumble. You see we call you both 'comrades.' That shows our good will. You are not exactly comrades, because you belong to the capitalist class, and you cannot understand us, nor we you. You are a man of good heart, I think, Comrade Podd, though your ideas are silly, and you must be born again, in the fire of revolution, before you can be anything but what you are—a capitalist exploiter and a bourgeois soul."

"Oh, come now," said Mr. Podd, testily. He could stand the capture of his ship with a certain equanimity, but he did not like to have his ideas called silly.

"You are going to argue," said Potchkin. "That is permissible. But it must be arranged for some other time. Just now we must get at the business. First, Comrades, I want to tell you that you must not try to do me and my men any harm, because that would be foolish and dangerous. Some other time you may fight us, but not now. It is very unequal. We the members of the great soviet republic, have confiscated this ship for our government, meaning that we are

returning it to those who really own it—the proletariat. We shall take it to Petrograd and turn it over to our comrades, who will know how to make proper use of it. Their need is greater than ours."

"But I and my party wish to go around the world—" expostulated Comrade Podd.

"No doubt," replied Potchkin. "But it is to be otherwise."

"I don't wish to go to Petrograd!" cried Comrade Podd, stirred to indignation at last.

"We do not wish you to go. You shall not go. You and your party are not yet educated to the soviet form of administration. You will be put ashore this afternoon, on an island which we should reach, according to the charts we have been looking at, about three—the way we are now steering."

"You leave my charts alone, you thieves!" roared Rumble.

"They are not your charts. They belong to the soviet," was the unperturbed answer.

"But you—you can't do this monstrous thing!" insisted Mr. Podd. "It—it isn't—it isn't *legal.*"

"I told you you were a bourgeois soul. That proves it," said Potchkin, with triumph. "The first thing you think of is law—law which was made to protect capital and enslave the proletariat. You will have ample time to discuss the matter, Comrade Podd. We should like to debate it with you, after luncheon. Whatever the result of the debate, of course, you are going ashore just the same. But as a man who likes arguments, as I do, I know there is great satisfaction in just talking for the sake of talk."

Comrades Podd and Rumble were silent. There

really didn't seem to be anything very pertinent to remark.

"As you know, Comrade Rumble," went on Potchkin, "we are not far from the island of Fernando de Noronha. But we shall not put you ashore there, There is a Brazilian convict settlement there, and that would be humiliating to you, and to the convicts, perhaps, according to the way you or they look at the matter. Nearer to Pernambuco, but farther to the northwest is an island which your late chief officer tells me is not inhabited. I think that would be a better place, because, you see, we don't wish you to be able to prevent us from taking the ship to Petrograd, as you might if you came in touch with the world. You must try to see our point of view, as well as your own. However, we shall put ashore with your full share of the provisions and supplies, together with your personal belongings. This is not customary with the soviet, when they disestablish a capitalist nucleus like yours, but we feel no animosity toward you as individuals, and we don't wish to hurt you."

"And what if I refuse to give up my ship—" bawled Rumble, starting for the spokesman with uplifted hand.

"Then," said Potchkin, drawing the captain's own pistol from his hip-pocket, I shall be obliged to kill you."

"No, no!" cried Mr. Podd, wildly, leaping to prevent the deed. "I will answer for him! Don't shoot!" Rumble turned and faced Podd with fierce indecision.

"Thank you, Comrade Podd," said Potchkin, simply. "You had better go now and tell your party to get ready to leave the ship."

The committee of three walked away, leaving Mr. Podd and Captain Rumble looking into each other's faces with that incoherent stare with which people regard each other immediately after a flashlight photograph has been taken.

XIII.

It was incredible. It was fantastic. It was annihilating. After Captain Rumble had shambled out, a broken man, Mr. Podd remained for some minutes in his room, floundering around in the slough of his tangled thoughts. It seemed like a bad dream. He rubbed his eyes with the back of his right hand, and tried to convince himself that such a thing was impossible. That a piratical deed like this could be committed on the high seas, with the world presumably at peace, with maritime and international law presumably functioning; moreover with the sun shining placidly overhead, the sea as calm as a lake, everything apparently serene—the nozzle manufacturer could not adjust his mind to the truth.

Yet he had seen and he had heard. Something had happened. The quiet hum of the turbines was in his ears, but he had a sense that everything somehow was different. He shuddered slightly. Then he thought of Fink. "I must find Fink!" said Podd, aloud. "He surely won't persist in this thing."

Unsteadily, Mr. Podd left his room, with the hazy notion that he might find Pete Fink in the chartroom, if this new order of things actually had taken place. In the companionway he ran against two smutty-faced oilers tussling for the possession of the captain's binoculars, one of them shouting profanely that the other had already looked through them the specified two minutes, and that it was his turn.

Men whom Mr. Podd had not hitherto seen were roaming around, with their arms full of stray bits of property. One of them was running his finger along a safety-razor handle, and squinting through it, and rapping it against the woodwork, possibly under the impression that it was a firearm of some new kind. Trunks were being hurled out of the staterooms of the pilgrims, and the crew were installing themselves, as befitted members of a proletariat ship.

In this horrible overturning activity, Mr. Podd ran plump into the man he was seeking. They came face to face abruptly, Fink with his black derby hat jammed down nearly to his ears, and a satisfied grin on his face; Mr. Podd bareheaded and white and trembling.

"Mr. Fink!" cried the manufacturer, "what does this mean? This surely can't go on, Mr. Fink. I beg you to consider what it means. I depend upon you to have it stopped at once."

"Stopped!" yelled Fink, ecstatically. "You can't stop 'em. Nobody could stop 'em. I couldn't. Potchy couldn't. They've caught the idea. The tools belong to the workers. This ship is just one of the tools. I wasn't so strong for going to Petrograd—but I guess it's a nice place, at that. We've put one over on you, Podd—you've got to admit that."

"Put one—put one over on me?" repeated Mr. Podd. "Why should you wish to put anything over on me—or the rest of our party, Mr. Fink? Is that justice? Is it decent? We trusted you, and you have shared with us what we had. We planned to do something that would benefit the world and its people. Are you going to spoil it all?"

"Benefit hell," was the response. "Podd, you're all

right, but you're just trying to rig up some sort of a government that will keep you on easy street and yet not have the things in it that hurt your feelings when you see them. That's all rot. We got to have leaders, we got to have government, and strong government, but the bosses have got to come from the people, the common people, like me and Potchy. It's just got to be a new deal—and this is our first hand. Besides, you ain't going to be hurt. You'll get back to the States some day—they ain't any island, I'll bet, that somebody don't visit some time. Me and Potchy are running this show now, and those that don't want to get hurt will——"

Mr. Fink stopped. His quick eyes had seen a seaman passing with a hairbrush in his hand, bearing a monogrammed "P. F." on the ebony back. Without a word Mr. Fink swung a hearty fist which caught the seaman under the chin and caused him to go upward a little before he came down. "That's *my* brush, you boob!" cried Mr. Fink, seizing his property. Then turning to Mr. Podd, he explained, affably:

"Haven't some of these fellers got a nerve, though?" He applied a boot to the southerly portion of the seaman as it was rising to flee, and then went on, as though nothing had happened:

"I don't want to be ungrateful, Podd. I'll tell you what I'll do. As soon as I get to Petrograd, whenever that is, I'll write to the proper parties that you and the rest of the pilgrims can be found on this island, and you'll be taken off then if you haven't been before. Now, that's fair, ain't it? Don't let Potchy know I promised to. He might not like it."

"Are you sure that—that no harm will come to the women from these men of yours?" quavered Mr. Podd.

"Don't worry about that, Podd. I'll guarantee that. I ain't that kind, and Potchy ain't neither. We've issued orders about that, and we'll shoot the first one that tries to get fresh. But you can't kick about the boys moving into your rooms, because you won't be on board after this afternoon. The wimmenfolks are packing now.

"Have you seen my daughter?" asked Mr. Podd, faintly.

"Yes. She's all right. She's a good sport about it. Not like Mrs. Tantruss. That high-brow dame hit Potchy on the head with her water-pitcher, and called him a low-browed troggodite, or something like that. He's got a bulb on his bean as big as an apple. But Miss Podd, she just says, 'This trip was getting kind of dull, anyway,' and begins packing right away, after making sure we hadn't hurt you."

"Is there nothing I can say that can turn you from this outrageous course?" asked Mr. Podd, dully.

"No. And it ain't outrageous—and while you can tell me it's outrageous and get away with it, I warn you you'd better not take that slant with the boys. They're feeling chesty, they are. If there was any booze on the ship, we couldn't hold 'em. Potch and me has all the firearms. Gee! but the captain and the officers were crazy when they tried to shoot us and couldn't find anything to shoot us with. We had the laugh on them. That's why I'm strong with the workers on board. They know that they never could have got to the officer's rooms and cornered the supply of cannon. It could only be done by one of the passen-

gers. So they know what they owe me—and they're grateful, all right. Besides, I organized 'em. Potch couldn't have done it. I held meetings and gradually slipped the idea into their boneheads."

"You don't speak very respectfully of your followers," commented Mr. Podd. "You seem to hold them in contempt. Is that one of the fundamentals of your ideal state?"

"Speak respectfully of them swabs?" gasped Mr. Fink, as though he had never heard of such an idea. "Why, they're solid bone from the chin up, Podd. Didn't you know that? They're nothing without a leader. Strong bosses is what they need, as I told you. But the bosses must be from their own class, that sympathizes and understands 'em."

"You are wrong," said Mr. Podd, shaking his head. "You can never succeed on that basis. You had better turn back before it is too late. Let us go forward toward a real communistic state."

"I'm off that stuff," said Fink, shortly, and turned on his heel.

Not only Captain Rumble, but all the executive officers, the chief engineer, his assistant, the chief electrician, and the wireless boys, seemed perfectly willing to give battle to the mutineers, unarmed and against impossible odds. But Mr. Podd would have none of it. He would have none of it, probably, even had he not perceived what suicide it would have been. Captain Rumble immediately retired from the conference, saying that he would never consent to leave his ship; and that if there was to be no fight, he would stick to *The Future* come what would, though he would not navigate her.

Vladimir Potchkin was equally sure that the captain was going ashore with the Podd party. He wanted the rest of the officers to remain on board, promising them that they would be sent back to their homes at soviet expense after docking the ship in Russia—but Rumble he would not carry. He had conceived a dislike for the heavy captain, with some reason. Mr. Podd finally persuaded the officers and engineers, and the rest of the executives, that it would be best for them to stay by the ship, which they at length decided to do.

Later, the second officer came to Mr. Podd and explained that they had a plan to take the ship as far as the Danish coast, and contrive to drive her ashore on Jutland, picking a sandy berth where she would not be hulled.

As Potchkin and his associates did not wish to be reported from the island of Fernando de Noronha, where there was a signal and cable station, they gave that place a wide berth, and so lost several hours. Thus, it was nearly five o'clock in the afternoon when the little island where the Podd party were to be landed was brought into view. The night comes quickly after the setting of the sun, in that latitude, so Potchkin announced that no attempt to land the pilgrims would be made until the next morning, and agreed that the Podd party could retain their rooms for that night, if they chose. But they did not wish to.

Instead, the little group remained on deck, during the length of the inky, tropical night, looking up at the vast assembly of stars, and trying to peer into that prodigious hole in the sky which the sailors call "Magellan's patch." They spoke nervously, even a little

banteringly, as people generally do who are at the brink of a certain catastrophe, the depths of which they have had no time to plumb. Even Mr. Podd was in unwonted good spirits; Willa was irresponsibly gay and expectant; and Dr. Bodger consoled himself, and attempted to console his companions, by remarking the likelihood that they would all benefit from a nut, fruit and green-leaves diet, on their island. All in all, not one of the party could definitely realize that they were to be marooned within a few hours. The notion was too outlandish to be grasped.

One solemn note was struck. All night long they heard a ceaseless tramp up and down the bridge deck on the other side, and they knew that the feet belonged to Captain Rumble; and they knew also that this was his cage in which he was weaving up and down; for an unwashed oiler stood guard, displaying a heavy length of iron bar ostentatiously now and then, and frequently making scurrilous remarks about master navigators, which Rumble seemed not to notice.

As soon as dawn came, the work of debarkation began with a rush. All the life boats, and the raft were put overboard, and the donkey-engine was tuned up, ready to lower the personal effects and supplies of the pilgrims. Those who had seen the indolent movements of the crew heretofore, would have found it hard to believe that they were the same men. They could not have shown more activity if the ship had been sinking.

Willa Podd, drily, spoke of this detail to her father. "It seems as though they were really anxious to get rid of us, Bill," she said.

But Mr. Podd was staring down into the forward

well, where the large wooden boxes containing the copies of his book, were being brought up and dropped over the side into the waiting boats. To do them justice, the men handled Mr. Podd's books with care. Every box would have gone safely to the island, except for an accident, when a badly placed box upset one of the boats, and turned it turtle, the box going to the bottom, where it could be clearly seen. Potchkin had the courtesy to come to Mr. Podd immediately with an apology.

Mr. Podd was not in the mood to consider the accident seriously. But he gave voice to a question which had been engaging him. "Mr. Potchkin," he said, "you speak English remarkably well. Do you mind telling me where you learned it?"

"Not at all, Comrade," was the reply. "I went to your School of New Political Thought, in Chicago. That is where I picked up most of my advanced ideas about government, too. For that reason I have a tender feeling toward you, though we are far apart in our souls."

Mr. Podd made no reply. Chicago, and his school of new political thought, seemed on another planet.

The proletarians were undoubtedly generous in their distribution of the ship's stores. Boatload after boatload was landed on the shining beach—foodstuffs, bedding, tarpaulins, bed-springs, chairs, a good supply of Mr. Podd's cigars and tobacco, and plenty of matches—everything which the pilgrims would need during their stay. Last, before the pilgrims themselves, went the party's trunks and bags.

Mr. Peter Fink, the organizer, was standing at the bulwark on the shore side, with his hands in his

pockets, smiling amiably upon this strange procedure, when he saw one of his own trunks being lowered into a boat. He gave a great outcry to Potchkin, who was directing operations from the bridge.

'Hey, Potch!" yelled Fink. "There's one of *my* trunks in that lot. Have 'em send it back when the net comes up."

Mr. Potchkin looked down upon his fellow conspirator with inscrutable eyes. "No, that's all right, Comrade," he replied. "You're going ashore, too. You'd better get your bag ready."

"Me going ashore? Not much! What do I want to go ashore for?" cried Fink.

"I don't know what you want to go ashore for. But I know you're going. And you're going to stay, too."

Pete Fink began to rage. He shook his clenched fist and cried, "What d'ye mean? Ain't I one of the crowd? Didn't I organize this?"

"Yes," replied Potchkin, blandly. "But a secret council has just declared that your company wouldn't be desirable. True, you organized, and assisted our enterprise. You are a good organizer. So was Kerensky. But just as the real proletarians got rid of Kerensky, after the first revolution, so we don't need you any longer. In fact," he added, "I'd rather have any one of the Podd party along with me, than you, Comrade Fink. You are at heart the worst autocrat of them all. You talk of nothing but dues, dues, dues—and you want bills paid, and obligations regarded as important—which shows that you are a capitalist—or you would be if you got the chance. Our kind of government pays no bills, and pays no

dues. You had better get ready to go peaceably, or you may be thrown overboard."

Mr. Fink grew limp, and remained in a sort of coma until he was bundled along down the ladder with the rest of the pilgrims, and placed in one of the boats. He lost his stiff hat on the way down the ladder, and it floated like a little boat alongside *The Future* until one of the crew joyously threw a tin of tomatoes into its upturned maw and sank it like a pot.

The last man to leave *The Future* for the island was Captain Rumble. He had sworn by all that was righteous that he would never leave the ship on his feet—and he kept his resolution. In a wild burst of rage he attacked a whole party of proletarians with his bare fists, and was working havoc among them when another party came upon him from behind, managed to get him down on his back, and with ropes trussed him up like a barbecue ox. Then there was a debate as to how to get the captain into one of the boats. Potchkin, like a true leader, devised the mechanism. The captain was rolled into one of the luggage nets, the donkey engine started, and he was raised into the air like so much freight, swung over the side, and lowered. Whether maliciously or not, the donkey-engine tender let the net drop abruptly the last six feet into the boat, which brought a groan from the captive, and nearly sank the small craft.

Half an hour from that time, the pilgrims were all ashore. They sat on their trunks, on the beach, forgetful of the blistering sun which beat upon them, and saw the last boats rowed back to their late home. They saw the boats swung back to the davits; they saw the ladder drawn up the iron hull, and, finally, they saw

the ship get under way and move slowly out to the open sea. They saw hands waved to them. They saw *The Future* grow smaller. They saw the long line of black smoke lengthen and attenuate. And, at last, they saw nothing but the blue waters, and the sunlight playing upon them dazzlingly. And all this time nobody, not even Master Tantruss, said a word—or if anyone spoke, it was not observed.

They sat on their trunks, on the white beach. They saw white gulls, swerving down to the water where *The Future* had lain, picking up stray jettisoned crumbs. All was quiet. The water rippled in, near their feet, and a big crab went staggering along the water-line.

It was Miss Frale who broke the silence. She looked around her, then looked down at her trunk, and at herself sitting on her trunk. Then she laughed, a trifle hysterically.

"It reminds me," she said, "of the time I lived with a lady in New York, who was dispossessed for not paying her rent. We sat on the sidewalk, on our trunks, just like this a long time. A big crowd gathered, and the lady I lived with cursed, and I cried. Then a man came up and put a five dollar bill on the trunk beside me. Other people put more money on the trunk. We took in thirty-five dollars that afternoon—more than enough to pay for a moving van, and a real blow-out besides. I've often thought it would have been a good paying business to go into."

"I wish they had taken you to Petrograd where you belong!" snapped Mrs. Tantruss.

"Nature's will be done!" said the Rev. Joseph Loasby.

"Well, I'm damned!" remarked Mr. Fink.

"I've left my bundle of poems on the boat!" wailed Miss Peebles.

"I hope they all die of cirrhosis of the liver," imprecated Dr. Bodger.

"Well, it might have been worse," said Willa Podd. "They might have put us ashore in Greenland."

"Is this Australia?" asked David Dostey, innocently.

"Well, I hope this is radical enough for you, Podd!" commented Henry Waddick.

"I can understand now what happened to the Russian branch of our nozzle business," soliloquized Albert Neale.

"Gee, I'm hungry!" exclaimed Freddie Tantruss.

"The boy is right," assented Julius Pickbill. "We have had no breakfast, and it is nearly noon. Hadn't we better be straightening out our things, and preparing a good meal?"

Captain Rumble sat up and nodded briskly.

XIV

Captain Rumble, who had sat up with alacrity at the mention of food, immediately threw himself prone again with even greater alacrity, accompanied by a profound and profane groan. When lowered into the boat in the luggage net, the Captain had been sorely bruised in that part of his person which, being heaviest, was certain to seek a resting place first. This is the law of gravitation.

Having uttered what was in his mind, in language which was more forcible than considerate, Captain Rumble turned over gingerly upon all fours, and essayed to rise from that position.

It was not a dignified picture which the late navigator made. He looked, as Mr. Pickbill remarked afterwards to Willa Podd, as though he were taking one of the daily dozen exercises, recommended for making fat people thin, and thin people fat. Besides, a man who is not used to being upon his back at all, except in a bed where he can grasp the side-irons upon arising, can have no idea of the difficulty which Captain Rumble encountered. It was necessary for the captain to keep his two feet on the sand; but that necessity caused his head and shoulders to be nearer the earth than his feet, and threw all his vast weight upon his hands. When he took one of his hands from the beach, the weight was doubled upon the other hand, and it could not be moved. If he put back the first

hand, and removed the other hand, then the trouble was simply transferred.

Captain Rumble, keeping up a steady stream of naval comment, tried one hand and then the other, and finally bawled, "Here! give us a lift there, why don't you?" to the group which was watching him with deep sympathy, but different about offering assistance.

The first to spring forward in response to Captain Rumble's appeal was David Dostey. He took a step forward, no doubt with the sincere notion of assisting the captain. But what he saw before him was the vast expanse of tight blue trousers, slanting invitingly toward him at an angle of twenty-odd degrees. To young Dostey's primitive mind the invitation was irresistible. There are certain atavistic impulses which lay far deeper than any artificial social duties. It is a matter for the biologist to consider, whether the first man on earth, able to visualize any opportunity, did not instinctively kick the rear end of all animals, and if so, why?

However that may be, young Dostey, who had undoubtedly gone in good faith to the assistance of the Captain, was faced by this trousered opportunity, and seized it. Or, rather, he kicked it.

The result was instantaneous. Miss Peebles, Mrs. Tantruss and Miss Podd fled down the beach at the first volcanic roar which came from the Captain. Miss Frale did not join the other ladies. She observed Capt. Rumble with the eye of a connoisseur of impolite language, and smiled. Mr. Dostey, suddenly becoming alarmed by what he had done, distanced the flying ladies, and raced toward a point of land, several hundred yards away, turned the point and disappeared.

It was fully ten minutes before the Captain would permit anyone to approach him. He then remarked that if he ever laid hands upon that half-witted assassin, he would slit him from throat to heel and feed him to the fish. And even Mr. Podd, with his well-known pacific tendencies, could not help admitting that the captain's plan had some justification.

Meanwhile, the ladies had returned, and Captain Rumble, assisted to his feet, took charge of the proceedings, as he felt was proper. He had been master of the ship, and under the laws of nations, he was the natural leader and thinker for the marooned passengers.

"Let's go and see what's in the nature of grub those hell-hounds have left us!" ordered the captain.

The whole party moved toward the pile of supplies, bedding and furniture which lay helter-skelter on the beach where the seamen of *The Future* had dumped them.

"This will give us plenty to do!" growled the captain. "This stuff has got to be sorted, and some kind of shelter rigged. When it rains in this lattitude, you want a bit of cover. It don't rain—the earth just jumps upward into a lake! We've got to get things to rights, today, so we can reconnoiter this island tomorrow. There may be some animals we can shoot, besides that damned lunatic, Dostey. But we haven't any thing to shoot with! Look sharp there, you cock-eyed swab—Finkelstein or what's your name—shake a leg there and pull out some of that dunnage!" The latter remark was addressed to the late organizer of the Ohio carpenters, who had become a somewhat chastened individual. Mr. Fink jumped for what he assumed was the "dunnage," and began

to remove cases of tinned goods from the welter. "No, not those, you swab! Lay hold of that bedding and pile it up!—You, sawbones!" continued Captain Rumble, turning to Dr. Bodger, "get alive there! D'ye think this is a consultation on a case of the itch? . . ."

As he proceeded, Captain Rumble found himself more and more in his element. If he had no longer a ship under his feet, at least he was in command. By his orders, a fire was soon made, inside a hastily-built stone oven, and several tins of food were ripped open and set to warming. They were, in fact, almost warm enough, under the rays of the sun. The pilgrims were perspiring dreadfully; the Captain himself was almost visibly boiling away; but habit is strong, and habit indicated that tinned foods must be warmed on a fire.

Mr. Podd showed little interest in the proceedings. His mind was evidently far away from the island. He obeyed the captain's orders mechanically, and nervously plucked at the ends of his mustache with trembling fingers. Finally he got a chance to say to Rumble in a confidential tone:

"What do you think the chances are of our being taken off this island soon, Mr. Rumble?"

Captain Rumble eyed the manufacturer sternly a moment, and replied. "I think the chances are thin, Podd. I mean it. God knows I don't want to make it worse than it is. But as far as I know anything about this part of the world, this place might as well be on the moon, for all the company we're likely to have. There is a chance that some Indians may cruise the waters in their boats—from the mainland. But if what I've read about the North Brazilian Indian is

true, I think we'd be just as happy if they didn't visit us."

"But," said Mr. Podd, brightening a little at the thought, "if the officers on *The Future* can manage to run the ship ashore on Denmark, as they said, then they'll report us as being here, and we'll be taken off, won't we?"

"Mr. Podd," said the captain, "if you want to harbor any notions about those scoundrels who've stolen the ship, you can! For my part I wouldn't give a snap of the fingers for the lives of any of my officers."

Mr. Podd whitened. "You—don't—not as bad as that?"

"Well, what do *you* think of them? Would *you* start a Sunday-school for 'em?" growled Rumble.

Mr. Podd was silent. Then after a pause, he whispered, "You—you think we'd better be prepared for a—for a long stay here?"

"I'm prepared to stay here till my clothes wear out, and then run around naked," replied Rumble, shortly.

"Good heavens!" said Podd. He left the captain's side, and sought Neale, who was laboring like a true man, stopping only now and then to brush the sweat from his eyes. To Neale, Mr. Podd told what the captain had said.

Neale straightened up belligerently. "Why, it can't be, Mr. Podd," he said, sternly. "The plant can't run alone."

Podd nodded. "But if we can't get away from here, we can't get away, Neale. I don't see what difference it makes whether the plant can run or not."

Mr. Neale was not inclined to that way of thinking. He did not know how the Podd party would leave the

island, but he knew that the plant could not go on indefinitely without Mr. Podd and himself. That was all there was to that. He was so sure of this point, as he and Mr. Podd sat on one of the boxes of books, that Mr. Podd was almost convinced, until suddenly he asked:

"But how are we going to get away from here, Neale?"

The secretary replied, "We've *got* to get away!"—and then Mr. Podd saw Neale as he was. Neale's life had been spent with possibilities. Mr. Neale knew that steam, electricity, wheels and hand-labor could be made to produce certain results. He had no acquaintance with a world in which steam, electricity and wheels did not exist. His mind had not yet adjusted itself to that kind of world. Consequently he was just as much use to Mr. Podd, at the moment, as a babbling infant.

It had to be said for Comrade Potchkin that in spite of his piratical tendencies, he had really showed some consideration for the welfare of the marooned pilgrims. A less thoughtful proletarian might have forgotten to include, among the supplies which went ashore, the necessary plates and other tableware which are called for by the custom of western manners. Potchkin supplied everything. He donated it, to be sure, from what was not his to give; but such philanthropy is not infrequent even in the best capitalistic circles. A good deal of public applause has always been awarded to a man who generously dispenses other people's property.

The result was, at least, that though Miss Peebles, who volunteered to warm the baked beans and the

tinned peas, and make coffee, burned the beans, and lost some of the peas in the fire, and so fortified the coffee that it looked and tasted like primeval ooze—the hungry pilgrims went at the food with a will, and sighed with satisfaction when the meal was over.

Only Dr. Bodger frowned upon the picnic feast. He remarked scathingly that he didn't see that poisonous proteins which were encased in tin were necessarily better than those which remained in the open air. They all had the same disastrous effect on the colon. He cheerfully predicted that within a month, unless they could find ample green leaves and nuts and fruit on the island, they would all have scurvy. But it was observed that he ate his share of the burned beans.

Miss Frale ate alone, some distance from the party. Mr. Podd looked over at her now and then, compassionately; and seemed about to plead her case anew with Mrs. Tantruss, but the young woman sensing his desire shook her head at the manufacturer meaningly, and expressed by signs that she was perfectly contented with her lot.

There was one absentee at the dinner. Young Dostey had completely faded from the island landscape. Captain Rumble, gripping his knife stoutly, remarked that Dostey thereby showed his first sign of intelligence.

Directly after the meal, Captain Rumble began to assert his leadership again. "Now, then," said he, "we've got a lot of work to do. We can't sit here idling and talking. Mr. Neale, I appoint you to make a survey of this island, and find how things lay. Watch for fruits and other food; but don't eat any before you show them to me. I know something about tropical

fruits. Keep your eye out for turtles on the shore. Likely we'll be needing turtle meat before we're through with this excursion. And see if you can't draw a little map of the island, as well as you can. There'll no doubt be some cove where driftwood comes in. We'll be needing building material, I'm thinking."

"Very well, Captain," replied Neale, respectfully, "if Mr. Podd says I should do it." The secretary looked at Mr. Podd for orders.

"Why, it's a good idea," said Mr. Podd, slowly. "But I thought we'd better have a meeting, first, and start things right. That's the way we do at the plant, Captain Rumble. It's more efficient."

"This isn't a plant," returned Rumble. "I'm in command here, Mr. Podd. I don't wish to be overbearing, sir, but that fact should be remembered. Do as I said, Mr. Neale, please."

Mr. Neale hesitated. He recognized only one authority in the world, and that authority was William Podd. Mr. Podd renewed his plea for a conference.

"It won't take long, Captain," he said persuasively. "And we then start right. Each should know what his or her duty is to be. It seems more business-like."

"Well, then," agreed the Captain, reluctantly, "let's get to the conference. We've no time to lose. When the sun sets, down here, it's like a curtain being let down on you. No twilight, or any of that nonsense. Mrs. Tantruss, you can be washing up these dishes while the conference is going on. That son of yours can get the water from the ocean. Don't use any of that drinking water from the keg. That's precious."

Mrs. Tantruss bristled. "Well, I call that cheeky!"

she cried. "Why should I wash the dishes, Captain Rumble? I'd like to know! Do you suppose I've nothing better to do than wash dishes? Freddie, you leave that pail alone. We're not to be ordered around by an obese sea-captain."

"Podd, will you tell this woman to obey my orders!" roared Rumble. "Good God, sir, are we to have mutiny again? Do you understand your position, you people?"

"If you don't mind, I'll be washing up the dishes while the meeting goes on," suggested Julius Pickbill, mildly. "Perhaps, after this, we could arrange to do it in rotation."

"All right—do it, if you're fool enough," assented Rumble, glaring at Pickbill unpleasantly. "But it's a woman's job."

"A woman's job! Well, talk about a mid-victorian mind!" snorted Miss Peebles; but Mr. Podd motioned her into silence.

"I'll help Mr. Pickbill," offered Willa Podd. "I don't mind a bit. It'll be good for me, anyway."

Podd smiled thankfully at his daughter.

"Now, I've been thinking," began Mr. Podd, "that things are not as bad as they might be. Here we are, on this island, when we really should be on our way to Australia. It's disappointing, of course. But it has occurred to me that Fate has thrown another opportunity in our way. We have hitherto been *talking* about the co-operative, or communistic commonwealth. After all, we have only been talking, haven't we? Now we have a chance to put it into actual practice. That's something, surely."

"Exactly what I have been thinking, Mr. Podd,"

exclaimed the Rev. Joseph Loasby. "Here we are, in that ideal state where money is of no importance. Brotherhood and the spirit of unity is all that counts. Who cares for the so-called rights of private property, under these conditions?"

"I do," responded Mr. Waddick, promptly. "And don't you forget it!"

"You'll come to care less for them," was the suave reply from the clergyman. "Time will favor the communistic idea."

"We certainly got the tools of production right in our hands, whatever they are, and whatever we can do with 'em," suggested Mr. Fink, mildly.

"Is that Judas going to be in this conference?" yelled Rumble, pointing at Fink, who shrank back visibly at the horrible grimace which went with the word "Judas."

"Be patient, if you please, Captain," begged Mr. Podd. "I think Mr. Fink regrets his hasty act as much as any of us. Besides, if we are to live on this island, it is impossible not to show the spirit of brotherhood. Life would be intolerable."

"I hope there are deadly poisonous insects here, that's all I say," growled Rumble, fixing his eyes on Fink, "and they have sense enough to kill off the Judases."

Mr. Podd, after shaking a deprecating head at this outburst, proceeded:

"Don't you see how favorable the situation is, for us to put the commonwealth of brotherhood on the map, my friends? Why, it's almost worth all we can suffer, to have this chance. In the first place, we will hold all our little precious store of goods in common."

Mr. Podd pointed at the pile of supplies, on the beach. "We shall have leisure—and we shall prove that William Morris was right when he said that it was the instinct of people, when not driven by capitalistic machines, to make beautiful craftsman things with their hands. We——"

"My store will go all to hell!" suddenly burst out Henry Waddick, in tears. "My wife——"

Mr. Podd was sympathetic, but he could not stop to comfort the Grape City grocer at the moment. "On our little island there shall be equality for all. No class feeling. Nobody puffed up by owning more chattels than somebody else. No exploitation of human beings for profit. We need no government. Why, life has put this great test into our keeping!" Mr. Podd's eyes glowed with hot enthusiasm.

"There's got to be a *leader,*" said Captain Rumble, decidedly. "I'm responsible under the laws of nations for your welfare."

"Don't you see, we shall need no leader?" pursued Mr. Podd, "we shall have no problems except those of mutual helpfulness, Captain. Of course, we shall need a council, or moot, to talk over plans. We can have a sort of Mayor, if we like, who shall decide little disputes which may arise. Yes, perhaps we *should* have a Mayor. Minor questions of procedure must arise among human beings. But no leader in the ordinary political sense is necessary."

"Well, put it as you like," said the Captain.. "You can call me the Mayor, if you want to. God knows I'm a landlubber, now." This last remark came with bitterness, and the tears glistened in the honest eyes.

"But the Mayor would have to be elected, of course,"

went on Mr. Podd. "That is the spirit of the commonwealth."

"A commonwealth built on canned beans is a failure from the start!" said Dr. Bodger. "Canned beans produce uric acid. If this island can't produce real food, we're goners."

"You don't mean to tell me we can't ever get away from here?" shrieked Waddick, alarmed newly. "I've been dragooned into this, Podd, and you're responsible for my store—and me——"

"Be patient, Mr. Waddick," said Mr. Podd, setting the example of patience, himself.

Julius Pickbill and Willa Podd had finished with the dishes, and sat down in the little circle, listening eagerly, but making no comment. When Mr. Waddick charged her father bitterly with being at the bottom of his woes, the young woman flushed and seemed likely to retort upon the grocer, but managed to put away her anger.

There were so many questions to decide, that, together with the interruption of a terrific rain storm, which came up almost without warning, and sent the party scuttling over to the cover of the tarpaulins, where they lay for an hour like caterpillars under leaves, the setting sun caught them unawares, just as the captain had predicted. It was too late even to build a fire and prepare supper. They had to be content with dry biscuits and cake-chocolate, with dry prunes for dessert.

"Now you see it's as I told you," bawled Mr. Rumble. "Here we are with nothing done, and no place to sleep but on the ground; I told you!"

"Well, I don't think we shall be the worse off," said

Mr. Podd. "We had better get our blankets ready and find places for the men and women to sleep. Tomorrow we can build a shelter of some sort. Do you think it would be wise to have a fire all night, Captain? Would there be wild animals——?"

"I don't know. But we should have a fire," was the prompt answer.

So the Podd pilgrims ate their dry biscuits and chocolate and munched their prunes. The wind had gone down, and a slight evening chill had settled around. They withdrew prudently from the beach to a sheltered place near a clump of palms and a tangled thicket. And, around the cheerful blaze, made from dead palm branches and bits of driftwood, they discussed the morrow of their Arcadian paradise, where there would be no private property, no money, plenty of leisure, self expression without repression, and the spirit of brotherhood over all.

"The first thing we should do, in the morning," said Mr. Podd, "and I think Captain Rumble will agree with me, is to make an inventory of our supplies. There will be beds and bedding for each person, and the little property in our bags will, of course, be our own, unless we wish voluntarily to give it to the common fund. The rest will go into the common stock, to be drawn upon for the common weal. I feel sure there is not a soul among us who would not regard taking anything without permission from that common store, as a breach of the good will and fellowship which will be the basis of our colony. Are you all agreed?"

They seemed all agreed.

"Then it is settled," went on Mr. Podd, "that after the inventory tomorrow morning, no member of the

colony shall ever touch any of the common stock without the assent of the whole body politic."

There was no dissent.

"Now," said Mr. Podd, finally, "I think we all feel that life has not dealt with us too unkindly. Would it be out of place if Mr. Loasby offered a prayer, before we go to sleep, of thanks to Him who is to guide us?"

The Rev. Joseph Loasby, who was about to leave the Unitarian Church because he found it too emotional, was good enough to pray. He managed to convey a doubt, however, whether he was praying to a guide or to a guide-post. Evidently afraid of falling into the trap of sacerdotal superstition, the Rev. Mr. Loasby somehow suggested, in a few well-chosen words, that he was speaking to a distant chemist, who had contrived the world very cleverly, for his amusement, from certain ingredients, acted upon by sunlight and air and decaying matter.

When the clergyman had finished, there was a distinct feeling of loneliness in the hearts of the pilgrims. They felt as little children might feel, left by accident overnight in a laboratory, with only the test-tubes and crucibles for companionship. The dark tropical night reached its sable arms out and took them in its moist, unmotherly embrace. A few parrots squawked dismally in the thickets. Insects swooped over their heads, shedding a phosporescent gleam, and humming uncannily.

Mr. Pickbill ventured, painfully, "Wouldn't it be good if—if we should all say the Lord's prayer?"

Nobody answered. Then Mr. Pickbill's voice began, in an amateurish and self-conscious way, like a child on the school platform:

"Our Father, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name——"

Instantly Willa Pickbill's voice joined; then another, and another, and when the end came: ". . . and the Power, and the Glory, Forever and Ever, Amen . . ." there was a dense silence; and then a little sob floated across the sandy ground, from where another member of the Podd party rested on her blanket, apart.

XV

When Mr. Podd opened his eyes the next morning, they were momentarily blinded by the radiance of the morning sun. For a few dazed moments he thought he was in bed, in his Poddsville home, and that the room must be afire. He called, "Willa!" in sleepy alarm. Then he recollected his bearings, and sat up quickly.

The blankets whereon the rest of the men had slept were still near Mr. Podd, but not a member of the party was to be seen. But, at some distance, there was the sound of disputing voices, and looking in the direction of the beach, the manufacturer saw that the pilgrims were surrounding the pile of common property of the communistic state, and raking articles hastily from it.

Mr. Podd had an uneasy sense of what was going forward. He made haste toward the common store. As he approached, he saw that each member of the party was depositing as much property as possible in a pile; and the disputes arose from questions of ownership over each new happy find. At the arrival of Mr. Podd, however, the pilgrims looked rather sheepish, and some of them dropped the articles they carried in their hands, and simulated a deep interest in the ocean, and the ruddy ball of fire which was rising to the eastward over it.

Even the patience of Mr. Podd was stirred by this gross display of the lust for private property. He expostulated, with a tinge of bitterness: "Wasn't it agreed that this common stock of goods should be respected?"

The pilgrims began to explain. There *were* a few things—just a few—they didn't mean to take anything much—they thought—they assumed——

Mr. Podd cut the arguments short. "It is loot!" he cried. "It is the disgraceful spirit of plunder which has brought the world to the state it is in. Worse than that, it is a broken promise."

"Well, I saw the rest of 'em prowling around here," protested Mr. Waddick. "I wasn't going to let them get ahead of me."

"I didn't get here first, Mr. Podd," put in Dr. Bodger. "I thought there might be something useful in a medical way—in case of sickness."

Mr. Podd glanced quickly at the article which Dr. Bodger still retained in his hands. It was a comfortable wicker deck-chair, which had been thrown into the boats for good measure by Potchkin and his comrades. Its utility was beyond question. But its medicinal value was open to dispute.

"Well, well," said Mr. Podd, relapsing into his customary patient good humor. "I see but one way out of this affair now. If we are to have loot, let us have organized and methodical loot. Let each one take as much as he or she can carry in one load, and that must be all."

"Freddie is small. He should have two loads," remarked Mrs. Tantruss.

"Well, well," responded Mr. Podd, evasively.

"Probably the gentlemanly thing would be to let the ladies grab their loot first," said Captain Rumble, who, though he did not like two of the ladies in question very much, was at least a gallant sailorman.

"The Mid-Victorian mind!" shrilled Miss Peebles. "He can't get away from it. As if the ladies can't grab for themselves, without any chivalry nonsense!"

So the Podd pilgrims plundered the common store by agreement, one arm load to each, and two to Freddie Tantruss. It was interesting to Mr. Podd to observe what they took.

Freddie Tantruss triumphantly bore away a large telescope. Mrs. Tantruss confined her efforts to food, as did most of the others. Mr. Pickbill took a firkin of lard, a choice which puzzled Mr. Podd for a long time afterward, till he knew the reason.

Dr. Bodger carried away his wicker chair in triumph. Willa Podd, Miss Peebles and Miss Frale, after searching a long time for something which they were unable to find, contented themselves with articles of small value and doubtful use. As for Mr. Podd himself, he took nothing. The sudden resurgence of the private-property idea had saddened him.

After a hasty breakfast, badly prepared by Mrs. Tantruss on her own offer, the work of making an inventory of goods began. The pilgrims discovered a good deal of pleasure in this task. Mr. Waddick especially was in his element. "I don't know what it is, but there's somehow a lot of fun checking up a stock of commodities, Mr. Podd," he said gaily, calling out, immediately afterward to Mr. Neale, who was acting as clerk:

"Twenty-two forty-eight-pound sacks of bread flour, one of them leaking!"

"I'm afraid, Mr. Waddick," replied Mr. Podd sadly, "that what you mention is nothing but a reflection of the love of private possessions. We must learn to overcome that."

"One keg of molasses! About ten gallons, I should reckon!"

"One ten-gallon keg of molasses," replied Mr. Neale, writing. "What variety?"

"Porto Rico, light, first prime quality!" responded Mr. Waddick. "Costs at wholesale fifty-two cents a gallon. I sell it in my store at ninety-five."

"That's too big a profit," said Mr. Podd. "I'm sorry to hear that, Mr. Waddick."

"It is not," responded Mr. Waddick, with spirit. "Molasses is hard to handle, and people won't give back the jugs. You may know the nozzle business, but you've never sold groceries. I know my business."

"It sounds too big," insisted Mr. Podd. "But I suppose it makes no difference what profit a business man takes. If the idea of profit and rent is fundamentally wrong, perhaps a man is no worse for taking a thousand per cent than ten."

Mr. Waddick did not know the economic theory of profit and rent, and did not appear to desire to. Instead, his face lighted up with pleasure as he held out a tin of tomatoes and tapped it with his finger of a fancier. "Now, those tomaytoes," he said, "are great. I sell 'em at cost, to get people to the store."

"Never mind that," suggested Mr. Neale. "How many cases of tomatoes?"

"Three. And a case of okra. I've had some okra on my shelves in Grape City for three years, and I can't sell it. There's no demand for okra. If I had mine here, I'd cheerfully donate it to the party."

Nobody seemed appreciative of this burst of contingent generosity. The only result of the offer was, that Mr. Waddick suddenly recalled by his own words to a recollection of the distance between him and his grocery store, burst into tears again and once more remarked that his Grape City business would go "all to hell."

"Well, then you'll meet it again, some day," said Captain Rumble, comfortingly. "Can't you work faster and talk less, Waddick?"

"One case of sauerkraut!" cried Mr. Waddick.

"What variety?" asked Mr. Neale.

"What difference does it make what variety? We can't get any more," cried Captain Rumble.

"It makes all the difference in the world," explained Mr. Neale. "An inventory should carry the brand-names of all articles. That is system."

Willa Podd heard this, and shuddered slightly. She had the feeling that she had somehow narrowly escaped being married to a man who kept his emotions in a card-index, cross-referenced.

After some speeding-up methods had been applied by the captain, the inventory work went along more briskly. By eleven o'clock they had a definite knowledge of the food and material which stood between the Podd Pilgrims and want. To the food, Captain Rumble was sure they could add fish, shell-fish, possibly turtles, turtle-eggs; and, it might be, certain wild

fauna which they could trap or ensnare. The island should certainly, judging from what they had seen of it, possess wild fruits.

The captain had picked up several bits of water-worn vegetable matter along the shore, which he declared were the fragments of the outer husks of coconuts. If there should prove to be, on the other side of the island, some coco palms, this would be a great boon. There were no palms of that variety in sight, however.

"There is no mention of tobacco, or matches, in that list, Neale," said Mr. Podd anxiously, after scanning the inventory. "I'm sure I saw both matches and tobacco put into the boats when they were being loaded."

"I *know* there were boxes of cigars when the stuff came ashore," insisted Captain Rumble. "I've had a queer feeling since breakfast. I couldn't explain it. Now I know what it is. I need a smoke."

"A cigar would cheer me up considerably," admitted Mr. Podd. "I'm afraid I'm a slave to tobacco. Won't you look again, Neale, and see if the tobacco hasn't been missed. And the matches. Those are even more important."

"I wish you'd look and see if you can't find some talcum powder," urged Miss Peebles. "My nose is beginning to peel. I just *know* I saw a whole box of it dropped into one of the boats."

All the men of the party were certain that they had seen tobacco and matches brought ashore. All the women were equally sure that they had seen a case of cosmetics—talcum, perfume, and hair-tonic put into

the boats. But no trace could be found of them now.

"As for matches, I suppose we could keep a fire burning continually," remarked Captain Rumble. "I've got a dozen matches or so in my pocket, which would be enough for a long time, if we kept a fire. But we can't smoke matches," he added gloomily.

Even Mr. Pickbill, who was not such an inveterate smoker as the other men, felt the need of tobacco since it had been mentioned. Mr. Waddick, alone, did not smoke. "I used to smoke," he explained, hastily, as though not to be thought a prig, "but it stunk up the store, and that was bad business. Some groceries can't bear tobacco smoke. Butter, for instance. Many a grocer——"

"Has it ever occurred to you, Mr. Waddick," said Miss Peebles crisply, "that the rest of us are not interested in the grocery business?"

Suddenly Captain Rumble astounded the whole party by uttering a terrific imprecation, and shaking his huge fist in the direction of a nearby thicket.

"What is it?" cried several pilgrims.

"It's that yellow-bellied, pigeon-brained numbskull that kicked me when I was down," howled the captain. "Ah, you had better run!" he continued, shouting in the direction of the thicket. "Don't you ever come within arm's length, you monkey-faced bilge-rat!"

There was a derisive cat-call from the thicket, and then young Mr. Dostey emerged into full view and deliberately placed a provocative thumb at his nose, with his fingers pointing in the direction of Captain Rumble.

Captain Rumble was so indignant that he shook like

a stout oak tree in a hurricane. "See that! There's a pilgrim for you!" he shouted wrathfully at Podd.

"Poor lad. I wonder if he has had anything to eat?" said Mr. Podd.

"Poor lad!" gasped the captain. "Do you mean to say, Podd, that you *want* him to eat?"

"Why, of course," replied Mr. Podd. "I lay awake thinking about him last night, Captain. You really must let me bring him back to our circle. I will go surety for him, Captain, that he'll not annoy you again. Poor innocent that he is, he'll starve, most likely, if we don't take care of him. Won't you let me bring him down among us, Captain?"

"Poor innocent, is he?" howled the captain. "Poor innocent will starve, will he? Do you see what he's doing this minute, Mr. Podd?"

Mr. Podd looked again in the direction of David Dostey, and was made speechless by what he saw. What he saw was this: young Dostey calmly took from his coat pocket a large cigar, lighted it, waved it in the air mockingly, and then bellowing forth two huge puffs of smoke, turned and re-entered the thicket.

"That's where the cigars and matches went!" choked out the captain. "And us, here, dying for a smoke!"

"Wait a minute!" cried Mr. Podd. He ran to the place where the pile of goods had lain in their first position on the beach, circled it several times with his eyes fixed on the sand, and then began to follow the trail where it led. The foot-prints were those of a small shoe. David Dostey wore a very small pointed shoe. The steps led directly to the thicket where Dostey had appeared.

"Yes," admitted Podd, when he returned, "Dostey

probably visited the common store during the night, or very early this morning. Of course, he didn't realize what he was doing."

"No, but we realize what he's gone and done," gurgled the captain. "He's got all our tobacco!"

XVI

The usual afternoon shower sent the pilgrims once more under the cover of their tarpaulins. But something meanwhile had been done.

Albert Neale had circled the outer fringe of the island, and sketched a little map of it. Roughly considered, the island seemed to be of about three square miles in extent, with a shape which was like that of a long-visored golfing-cap. At that point of the cap where the visor was joined to the rest, there was a quiet cove, where besides meeting with turtles that scrambled awkwardly into the water on his approach, Neale had seen vast quantities of driftwood strewn above ordinary high-tide mark. He reported that among this driftwood were sound planks, building-timber, boxes, barrels, and other objects which he could not name, but which seemed to have floated ashore from distressed ships.

Of fruits or coconuts Neale had nothing to report, for he had not penetrated into the interior of the island. But from short excursions beyond the edge of the undergrowth, he judged that the island was heavily covered with a great variety of tropical trees and plants.

"And I saw what I think was a baboon," he told the party.

"Very likely that was Dostey," suggested Capt. Rumble, sourly, mechanically rubbing his trousers-seat.

"Oh, no, not nearly so big," replied Mr. Neale, with all seriousness.

As to Dostey, Mr. Podd had done his best to rejoin that escaped pilgrim to the party. He had gone as far as he thought safe into the thicket where David had been seen to disappear, and had called to the lad a number of times; had even explained in a loud voice, at some length, that the black sheep would be received back into the fold upon a promise to behave himself. No reply came from the fastness where young Mr. Dostey was supposed to be in retreat. So Mr. Podd had to return to the party without effecting a redemption. The jungle was such a labyrinth that, after a few efforts to discover Dostey's hiding place, Rumble and Bodger gave up the attempt as hopeless.

With perhaps the sole exception of Mr. Podd himself, the rest of the male pilgrims did not seem anxious to have Dostey return to the fold, except for one reason. That reason was not uttered; but it was plain, by the way the men frequently rose nervously, shoved their hands deep in their pockets, and walked up and down the beach, that the lack of nicotine was being felt by their systems. Lacking the soothing influence of tobacco, the conversation sometimes took on an asperity, or a querulous tone, which a good cigar or a pipeful of the right mixture would have readily assuaged.

Nobody mentioned tobacco directly. The men began to hint at it; to refer to it by innuendo; usually speaking of tobacco as "it" or "that stuff." For instance, after a gloomy silence, Captain Rumble would remark: "I suppose even if I had a gun and could shoot that

idiot, he's probably hidden IT somewhere where we couldn't find it."

And Mr. Neale would reply, "Well, I wonder if 'the stuff' is in that thicket where he came out?"

"Never mind," consoled Mr. Podd. "I shall have him back among us in another day, I'm sure. Then we can put IT into the common stores."

The next problem was certainly that of shelter—a more or less permanent shelter of some sort, for the women of the party and the men, and for Miss Frale, who was steadfast in her determination to live apart from the rest of the pilgrims. The Podd party hoped that the shelter need be less permanent; but they were beginning to be afraid that Captain Rumble was right when he said that the island was far from the beaten track. They all pinned their hopes to the success of the ship's officers in going ashore somewhere—and to the chance of being reported as marooned.

Meanwhile, said Captain Rumble, the efforts of the men of the party had better be directed toward getting that timber from the cove. He himself shuffled his huge body over to the cove in question and inspected the driftwood. His judgment was, that while it would be easier to build their shelter not far from the driftwood, to save transporting the material, the very reason why the wood had come ashore at that point was a good reason for not building there. It was exposed to the easterly storms, and there was always the danger of a high tide overflowing that part of the island, as could be seen from the marshy aspect of the shore at that point. It would therefore be necessary to bring the timbers to the spot where they had slept the night before.

"If we all take a hand, and set our shoulders to it," said the Captain, "we should be able to sleep under cover by tomorrow night. So we'd better be getting to it, without delay."

But Mr. Podd, who had grave doubts about doing these things haphazard, first held a consultation with Albert Neale. Their factory experience should be put to some use. Years ago, said Mr. Podd, before the efficiency system was introduced in the Podd plants, the waste of effort was scandalous. It had taken several men to do the ordinary unskilled work which was now performed by one man. This was the result of co-ordinated effort.

Mr. Podd said: "Just think! It was found that men did not know how to lift! You wouldn't believe it. Yet they didn't know how to economize their own strength in lifting objects. They pulled too hard at times, and not hard enough at others, and bent over too far, or not far enough. It's extraordinary how much work can be done on the efficiency system. Fortunately Mr. Neale has studied it closely, Captain, and he will show you how it works."

Captain Rumble did indeed stand by in admiration while Mr. Neale taught the men of the party how to raise the planks upon their shoulders, with one concerted movement; how to walk in step; when to rest in unison; and how to drop the plank when they arrived at its destination. Without protest, even Mr. Waddick lent himself to the work, till his eyes bulged dangerously. Mr. Waddick had been used to whizzing, in his grocery store. He was now learning from an efficiency expert how wasteful whizzing is. These labors must be performed with serene method.

The planks, such as they chose for their shelters, were heavy, and the sun was hot. The system called for frequent breathing spells; but each time the men rose to take up their loads, they came back to it with greater effort. Captain Rumble scratched his head frequently, and was about to speak, when the clock-like voice of Neale would ring out: "Time!" and the party would bend—lift, raise, shoulder, hump, ha, march!" The sand slipped from beneath their feet. Sometimes they fell. Mr. Neale even knew how a man should fall. "If you feel yourself falling," he ordered, "shout 'Fall' to give the rest warning, and then just sit down quietly. Don't try to save yourself."

"But I've got an idea!" shouted the Captain.

"No time for it!" replied Neale. "Ready! Bend, lift, raise, shoulder, hump, ha, march!"

They had been bending and raising and shouldering and humping and marching for some time, when Captain Rumble, after vain attempts to give the world his idea, spat on the sand and gave the plank such a heave that it left the shoulders of the other men, and grounded them.

"Damme if I do this any more, even for the sake of efficiency!" cried the Captain. "Lookye here, Neale! How did these planks get on this beach? They floated, didn't they? Well, what's the easiest way to carry anything that will float? On water, ain't it? Then we're going to just drag these planks into the water, and I'll push the whole lot round to the other side of the point before you could carry a cigar-box across that damn Sahara desert!"

Mr. Neale looked at Mr. Podd. Mr. Podd looked at Mr. Neale. Neither of them spoke for some moments.

Finally Mr. Podd said to Mr. Neale, "Albert, there's something wrong with our system."

"I can't believe it," replied Neale.

"But the Captain is right," insisted Mr. Podd.

"Well, even if he is," said Neale, "I can't believe that our system is wrong. Why, it has always worked in our plants."

"That's true," admitted Mr. Podd. "We must look into this matter."

Having pushed the building material into the water, Captain Rumble, Julius Pickbill and Mr. Waddick, with their trousers rolled up, waded into the water and had no difficulty in navigating the lumber around to the desired place. The rest of the party, having discovered that Messrs. Rumble, Pickbill and Waddick were doing very well at the job, retired to the shade of some palms and began to discuss the communistic commonwealth. They were joined by the women of the party, except Miss Frale, and many interesting questions were raised. There was, particularly, the question:

"What would the Podd party, in case it should have to remain on the island for an indefinite period, do with its leisure time?" For there would, of course, be ample leisure. Mr. Loasby thought that a sort of reposeful contemplation, like that of the Brahmin *rishi,* would be attained. Mr. Podd felt that handicraft would be developed. Miss Peeble quite naturally felt that all the party would finally develop the gift of literary expression, and that they would compose many and beautiful books and poems.

Messrs. Rumble, Waddick and Pickbill, perspiring dreadfully, and having stopped their exertions for a breath of air, looked up at the circle of philosophers

who were disputing these fine points of the employment of communistic leisure.

"Well, damme if that ain't cool and inviting!" cried the Captain. "Here we are sweating our shirts off, and them politicians are holding a pink tea and talking about the universe or something. It looks as though us purblind old reactionaries, as that Tantruss woman called me the other day, were doing all the work."

"Well, it looks that way," puffed Waddick. "Holler to 'em, Pickbill, and tell 'em to quit spouting that gas, and get busy down here!"

"Oh, we've pretty nearly finished now," said Pickbill, "and besides, they'd be in our way. And it might hurt Mr. Podd's feelings; and we don't want to do that." Mr. Pickbill rubbed his red parboiled hands reflectively for a moment. Then he added:

"I guess it's always that way. I don't know much about it, but I've had some deep thinkers on government working for me in my restaurants, for years. They didn't do much work; and it seemed a shame to ask them to. I figure a man has just so much energy; and if he spends it in planning the ideal government, of course he don't get much time to do chores. You can't very well ask him to do both, now, can you?"

"But we didn't ask that bunch of gassers to think out any ideal state for us, whiles we were busting our suspenders over these logs," said Waddick.

"Oh, that wouldn't naturally occur to them," explained Pickbill. "A man who is thinking out something for somebody to do can't stop to consider whether somebody wants him to do it or not. They wouldn't get anywhere at all that way."

"Well, anyway," said Captain Rumble, mopping his

brow with his handkerchief, "thank God we've got a job now for that Judas, Fink, who landed us all here through his deviltry. Being a carpenter, he can build these shacks, and he's got to put on full-steam-ahead to get 'em done by the end of the week, too."

The thought of the prospective toil of Mr. Pete Fink filled the Captain with so much satisfaction that he gave up work on the moment, and invaded the precincts of the little circle which was devising the ideal State.

"Lookye here, Fink!" cried the Captain, "shake a leg, there, my man! We've got enough timber already for you to begin work on."

"Begin work on?" asked Fink, curiously. His tone was more courteous than it had been before he was expelled from the Soviet, and it was clear that he really didn't understand what the Captain meant.

"Why, I mean, start building the shelters," snapped Rumble. "You're a carpenter, so that's right in your line."

Mr. Fink smiled cheerfully. "Oh, I see. You thought I was a carpenter, Captain. That's funny, that is. *Me* a carpenter! That's a hot one!"

"Well, Podd said you were a carpenter," insisted the Captain.

"Maybe *he* did. But I didn't. I'm an organizer of carpenters' unions, but that doesn't make me a carpenter, does it? Why, believe me, Captain, I couldn't build a hen-coop, and get it plumb. I s'pose I could hit a nail about as often as you could, but that's all.

The Captain stared at Fink unbelievingly. "You—you're a—an organizer of carpenters, but you're not a carpenter? Do you hear that, Podd? He ain't a carpenter! Or joiner."

"No, the other guys do the joining. They join the union," replied Fink, who couldn't resist the flippancy.

"So what you do is talk?" bawled the Captain. "Can you do anything besides talk?"

Mr. Fink was aroused at last. "Well, I guess I'm as good as you are," he snapped. "You're a sea-captain, I suppose?"

"I am, and proud of it," responded Rumble, drawing himself up to his full stature.

"And what's a sea-captain supposed to do?" sneered Fink, eying the Captain blackly.

Captain Rumble let himself be drawn into replying, with dignity, "He's supposed to take ships from port to port, that's what he's supposed to do, Judas!"

"Well, then," was the reply, "what are we doing here?"

With a yell, Captain Rumble hurled himself suddenly upon the organizer of carpenters' unions, and bore him to earth. Mr. Fink, not being a very large man, was completely hidden under the corpulent form of the navigator, so that Rumble couldn't reach any part of the smaller man's body to pound with his fists. And, being afraid that if he should rise, his prey would escape him, the Captain thought it better to remain where he was. A tremor which agitated the body of the Captain, from stem to stern, indicated that Fink, half embedded in the sand, was struggling beneath.

"What do you mean to do?" gasped Mr. Podd fearfully. "You'll injure him, Captain Rumble."

"I mean to smother him," replied the Captain, with satisfaction.

"I don't blame him, father!" cried Willa Podd. "How can you blame Captain Rumble? After losing

his ship on account of this man, and then to have Fink throw it in his teeth, as an insult. Why, I could punch him myself!"

Captain Rumble turned his head slightly and cast a glance of gratitude in the direction of Willa.

"But we must arbitrate! The fundamental spirit of the new order will be arbitration of disputes," pleaded Mr. Podd. "Let him up, Captain, and we will talk it over!"

A tremor ran along Captain Rumble's form, indicating that something underneath the Captain wanted arbitration, too. But the Captain shook his head. "The only time to arbitrate with people is when you can't lay hands on 'em, or can't whip 'em," he replied. And he added with relish, "Sooner or later, this viper will wriggle his head out where I can smash it."

"Do let him up!" pleaded Miss Peebles. "That's a good man."

"I ain't a good man. I'm a purblind reactionary, I am," responded the navigator, placing his knee in a new and more pain-inflicting position.

But Miss Podd, who saw now that some harm might really come to Fink, if the Captain persisted in crushing him, was alarmed. She ran to the Captain's side and whispered in his ear. The Captain shook his head, gravely. Then Miss Podd whispered again. After a moment of thought, Captain Rumble cried:

"All right! Bear a hand there, men, and take me off this shrimp!"

The captain was raised to his feet and Mr. Fink was rescued from his position where he had become imbedded like a pliocene fossil. The late organizer of carpenters' unions was led away by Miss Peebles, look-

ing considerably rumpled. Nobody spoke for some time. Then Mr. Pickbill remarked, casually:

"Well, I've got a sort of knack for carpentering. I'll see what I can do toward knocking the huts together."

XVII

THE next few days passed quietly enough, with only those interruptions and dissonances which would be expected of a party of pilgrims who were now, under force of circumstances, in the real process of getting adjusted to one another.

Julius Pickbill, with the occasional help of Captain Rumble and Mr. Waddick, succeeded in "knocking together," as he had said, a large shelter for the men of the party, a smaller one for Willa Podd, Miss Peebles and Mrs. Tantruss, and a still smaller one for Miss Frale. Miss Frale insisted that she should take her share of the provisions and equipment, and live on the other side of the island.

"Oh, I can't have you do that, really!" objected Mr. Podd. "It isn't right. Already, Miss Frale, I can see that aloofness on the part of the other ladies, breaking down. Why, my girl, it won't be a week before we are all one happy family."

Miss Frale shook her head. "It's mighty nice of you to say that, Mr. Podd. Your daughter was so sweet about it, too. She's an ace, Miss Podd is. But I've had a chance to think things over. I want to be alone. I'm tired of people. I didn't realize how tired of people I was. Didn't you ever get tired of people coming into your office, in your factory, day after day after day?"

"Well, I suppose I have," assented Podd. "Yes, of course."

"Then you understand," went on Miss Frale. "Of course I never had any office hours. But I'm tired of people. If you'll only build me a little hut over on the other side of the island, and let me have a few books to read, and just a little to eat, I'll be ever so happy, I know."

Mr. Podd pondered the matter. He thought it a pity to see the young woman separate herself from her kind. In recent days her face had lost a good deal of its hardness, or sophistication, and had become more fair to look upon, and more like that of a girl just approaching the world for the first time. On the other hand, Mr. Podd felt that perhaps what Miss Frale needed was best known to herself. So he assented; and Pickbill made a little shelter for her on the North side of the island, about half a mile straight across from the main camp. Like the other shelters, the roof was made of palm fronds, thickly laid on and fastened with creeper-vines and withies, which were in abundance at the edge of the forest.

To the great delight of Dr. Bodger, the pilgrims began to discover edible and delicious fruits—guavas, wild oranges, mangoes, and a salmon-colored plum-like fruit which had a disagreeable odor, but a zesty flavor after the outer skin was removed. Captain Rumble recognized this fruit as one which he had seen vended in the streets of Bahia, years before, and which he had called "limburger," from its odor. It had another, and even more unpleasant quality, when eaten too liberally—but Dr. Bodger assured his patients that this effect would pass when the eater became more adapted to the fruit.

A nut, much like the castana, was also discovered

in profuse quantity; and this, together with several edible-leaved plants, filled Dr. Bodger's cup to overflowing. Thereafter, the doctor lived exclusively upon fruits, nuts and green leaves. And like a good propagandist, he tried to make converts. But he met with little success from the flesh-eaters. The Rev. Mr. Loasby was, indeed, persuaded to try this natural diet at one meal; but after finishing all the nuts, fruits and green leaves in sight, Mr. Loasby rose, looked a bit bewildered, and exclaimed:

"That's a good appetizer, doctor. Now I'm ready for dinner!"

Dr. Bodger shrugged his shoulders in disgust. "You're the appendicitis type," he clucked. "And when you're operated, I doubt if you'll come out from under the ether."

With which pleasant prediction, Dr. Bodger cracked another nut and dug out the meat with his pocket-knife.

Dostey gave signs, now and again, that he was still upon the island, and in good form. Sometimes, in the morning, the pilgrims found the well-known Dostey foot-prints all around the huts where they had slept. The common store was raided for such preserved peaches and prunes and loaf sugar as Mr. Dostey required, but the young man seemed to steal nothing maliciously, taking only a moderate amount as he needed it. In the day-time he was quite invisible, save on a few occasions.

Once, Mr. Waddick, returning from a timid incursion into the woods, related that he had come across Dostey seated upon a log, with a brilliantly colored parrot on either shoulder.

The pilgrims all gazed at Mr. Waddick reprovingly.

All except Mr. Pickbill, who said, reflectively, "I've heard of such things, Waddick. Up in Dover, New Hampshire, there was a boy who wasn't quite up to standards in brains, who could call any kind of a bird or animal to him. And it's well known that bees and hornets won't sting half-witted folks."

"Is that a fact?" asked Captain Rumble.

"Yes sir; at least I believe it is."

The Captain pondered heavily. "It looks to me as though it puts a premium on being nutty," he remarked, finally. "Will mosquitoes bite 'em?"

"I doubt it," replied Mr. Pickbill.

"What's the use of being intelligent?" growled the Captain. Then he added: "What wouldn't I give for a smoke! I wish I was a half-wit. I could have parrots sit on my shoulder, mosquitoes wouldn't bite me; and I'd have all the tobacco."

At the mention of tobacco, the other men stirred uneasily, and gloom surrounded the camp for a long time. To aggravate their desire, now and again a whiff of fragrant Havana aroma floated down from the woods into the camp. Dostey was enjoying himself.

"I really must find Dostey and bring him back to us," said Mr. Podd, with feeling.

"If you find Dostey, and the tobacco, and can't get 'em both back, you know which to bring," suggested Rumble.

Nobody in the party missed David Dostey quite as much as Freddie Tantruss. Perhaps because his playmate was gone, Freddie exerted himself to the utmost to make himself a nuisance in the men's party. For it had been considered desirable to have Freddie sleep in the men's shelter. Master Freddie, who had been

brought up exclusively on affirmations, showed the wisdom of his culture by obstructing Pickbill's efforts to build the huts; by interrupting the conversations with shrill war-whoops; by inventing a bow-gun which sent an arrow so close to Miss Peebles' seat of learning that it actually stuck in her hair and had to be removed with the aid of scissors. It was Freddie who put a piece of soap in the vegetable chowder which Miss Peebles was valiantly trying to brew from a recipe she had learned from an artist in Greenwich Village, New York. It was Freddie who slipped several turtle eggs into Mr. Waddick's pocket, while the grocer was dozing. It was Freddie—well, the rest of the pilgrims, including Mr. Podd, began to agree with Captain Rumble's estimate of this product of child-culture. But for the most part, they suffered in silence. It was no use to invoke the aid of Mrs. Tantruss. She insisted that Freddie was expressing himself; and it was wrong to thwart those outpourings of childhood. The child was the father of the future man.

Willa Podd tried vainly to get her father to take strong measures against Freddie. But Mr. Podd, tired though he was of Freddie's mischief, was too good natured and too philosophic to make trouble. "Sooner or later," he replied, "Mrs. Tantruss will see that he is annoying us, I'm sure."

"She does see it. She doesn't care, Bill," insisted Willa.

"Oh, I don't think that. She thinks we ought to think as she thinks, that's all," replied Podd. "When we get our communistic State really in operation, I think we can make Freddie understand his responsibility, and his social duty."

"I think he ought to be spanked, that's what I think, Bill."

"Oh, no; I'm sure not," was the hasty reply. "Only think, Will! What a pity it would be to start our little commonwealth by a mass assault on one of its members. Why the world is full of that sort of thing. Police, jails, armies, courts, punishments—those are the very things we want to get away from. Here, on this little island, there will be no poverty; because there will be enough for all, now that we have found fruits and nuts, and eggs; there will be no crime, because there will be no incentive to crime. Greed for property has lost its meaning. No crime; therefore no punishment."

"I don't say Freddie is a criminal. I say he is a common nuisance, Bill. How shall we deal with a common nuisance?"

"There won't be any. As soon as Freddie realizes that he owes a duty to all of us, in return for the duty of affection and care and faith we owe to him, he will be a good citizen of the commonwealth."

Willa shook her head doubtfully. "You and I know that, Bill," she replied. "But does *Freddie* know it?"

Podd thought he would. Podd was optimistic. Podd was incorrigibly optimistic, he admitted. Just at the moment, Podd was thinking more about the conduct of the State than about Freddie.

"Just see," said Podd to his daughter, with glowing eyes. "We are now getting settled here finally, Will, and in a day or two we shall hold our first great moot, or public council. I've been thinking over that matter of having a Mayor elected. I'm sure we could get along without one. The truest democracy is one that would need no committees and no head, because each

would go his or her way from mere habit of doing the proper thing. But with us, we have to realize that we are young, as a commonwealth, and we have tricky questions to meet. So I think we had better elect a Mayor, who will appoint two advisers for each month. In that way, we shall all get administrative experience."

"Well, an election will give us some fun," mused Willa.

Podd did not hear. He was deep in his subject. "You'll see," he went on, "that we shall be free from those abuses of politics in our country. Why? Because we shall have no incentive other than to elect the right person. No corruption, no bribery, no social influence, no appeal to class hatreds, brought about by the capitalistic system, no demagogues—nothing except the clear duty of each one to select the best qualified person for any function. Isn't that true?"

"Why, I dare say it is. It sounds correct."

"Well, if we can demonstrate this thing, in little, then I'm sure it can be done with any number of people. Take away the insane desire for private property, and you take away greed; take away greed and you take away corruption: own everything in common, and each man knows that the safeguarding of the common welfare is his own protection."

"But Captain Rumble thinks he is the leader, or Mayor, already. He says he is, by international law."

"I don't want to hurt the Captain's feelings," said Mr. Podd, severely, "but Captain Rumble is a man of violent passions, and unfit to be a leader in a communistic commonwealth. I tell you frankly, Will, I shouldn't vote for him. I think he'll see that we don't require the protection of international law any more."

Mr. Podd walked away in great good humor. As soon as he had gone, Albert Neale, who had been obviously seeking the chance for some time, came up quickly and said to Willa:

"You said I might speak to you some other time about—about what we were saying on board *The Future* that night. I—"

"Is it really necessary, Mr. Neale?" asked Willa, looking anxiously around as though seeking an escape from the encounter.

"I suppose not. Still, Miss Podd, I do so much want to talk with you. Your father is so much concerned now with this communistic State he gives me very little time. Bluntly, Miss Podd, how long do you think it will be before we get away from the island?"

"Why, how should I know?" replied Willa. "If Captain Rumble says what he really thinks, the chances seem slim, don't they?"

"We must get away. If we could build a boat! I'd risk it alone. I've got to get back to Poddsville. At any rate, I'm making all my plans, I'm thinking all my thoughts, on the basis of being back in Poddsville before the end of the year we planned to be away."

"I hope so, I'm sure, Neale. But I don't know. We might be worse off, anyway."

"If we get back—no, I mean *when* we get back—of course—I refuse to consider the possibility of staying here—I look forward to renewing my proposal—"

"Oh, Mr. Neale!" cried Willa, hastily. "I thought that was a closed matter. You know I told you that I'd be very glad to do anything I could for you, to help you in a business way, but that—that I'd already

made up my mind on that other matter. I mentioned Mr. Pickbill—"

"But I don't see the connection between Mr. Pickbill, and what I was going to propose," said Neale, innocently. "I—"

"You don't see the connection? You don't—" Miss Podd stopped short and sought Neale's eyes for light. She felt that the hotness of her cheeks was not due entirely to the tropical sun. Then she went on, breathlessly:

"Look, Neale; we're both old enough to talk frankly, and we've known each other for years and years. I don't want to embarrass you, and I—I feel that I'm being embarrassed. Just between you and me, never to be lisped to another soul—don't you want to—that is, weren't you going to ask me—heavens! say something, Neale! I'm messing this up horribly!"

The truth suddenly dawned upon Mr. Neale. He, in turn, blushed to the very roots of his hair. He pulled at his collar like a man who has just been reprieved after being partly hanged. "I—I never presumed to think that I should be considered by you, Miss Podd, as a husband."

"Then what on earth were you going to propose?" Willa asked, not without a tinge of indignation.

"Why, you see, I've been wanting your father to buy out the Atlas Steel Barrel Company. It seemed to me that we could handle the steel barrel business splendidly in connection with our nozzles. But he doesn't see it. I wondered whether, if I explained my position to you, and you agreed with me, whether you wouldn't use your influence with him to make him see it. I was going to propose that. But as to the other

thing—I feel honored, Miss Podd. I am a man of good habits, as you know, and when we come to think of it, it would be a fine thing for the Company—"

"Don't!" begged Willa. "I'll get you all the steel barrels you want, Neale—only go away! Leave me alone. I've made myself ridiculous! I'm bursting with shame!"

Mr. Neale, feeling that somehow he had managed to acquit himself poorly, and not knowing just where he was at fault, withdrew. Miss Podd sat down on the sand, put her handkerchief in her mouth, and bit it savagely. Then she burst into laughter, of a peculiarly mirthless sort.

That night, after she went to bed, Willa wondered whether she hadn't better be nice to Neale, hereafter, and get him to make a fair and square proposal to her, so that she could refuse him contemptuously. She felt that she disliked men exceedingly.

XVIII

THE morning of the Great Council, or Moot, when the Podd Pilgrims were to ballot for a Mayor and discuss the problems of the new State, Mr. Podd was feeling in fine fettle.

It is true, Mr. Podd's benevolence may have had a touch of strong egotism in it. It is not disparaging to say this. Nearly all great improvers, and uplifters of mankind, have been good working egotists.

It is true, Mr. Podd felt that the logic of events would probably result in his election as Mayor. He was not unduly puffed up about this. His notion of the ideal State was a community in which mayors and leaders were unnecessary. But, if it were advisable to have a temporary Mayor of the Podd Commonwealth, he could honestly think of nobody better fitted for the position than himself. He was not the man to put himself forward. But he was not the man, either, to be away from home if this office sought the man.

There was another, and more tender reason, why Mr. Podd was in high spirits that morning. He had brought back to the fold, the night before, the strayed lamb—David Dostey. Dostey was again a pilgrim. It had all happened as Mr. Podd thought it would. The nozzle manufacturer relied upon patience and persuasion; and he was rewarded.

Mr. Podd had taken a position on the edge of the undergrowth where Dostey was usually glimpsed, and had called affectionately to the wanderer several times. Finally, there was a movement in the trees, and Dostey came forth.

"You mustn't stay out here alone like this, my boy," said Mr. Podd, kindly. "You're coming back with me, aren't you?"

"Old Rumble would knock my head off," suggested David, looking in the direction of the camp.

"No, I promise you he wouldn't. David, you had no right to kick the Captain. It was very unsocial of you. I feel that you must regret it. But I've talked the matter over with Captain Rumble, and he promises that if you'll make a decent apology, he will forget it. He did this for me. Surely you'll be willing to do your share for me, too."

David shook his head. "Rumble just promised that so I'd come back, and he could tan my hide," said the youth, knowingly.

"Oh, no; you don't know Captain Rumble. He's a man of his word. Besides, David, we're going to have an important and interesting event tomorrow. The great council meets for the first time, and we're going to elect a Mayor. You'll be interested in that, I know."

Mr. Dostey didn't seem dazzled by the news, so Mr. Podd added:

"You know what an election is, I suppose, David?"

"Oh, I reckon I do. It's a time when niggers had better stay out of sight. I know all about that. I've voted."

"You've voted? Well, well! Down South, I suppose? Tell me about it."

"Twasn't nothing much," related Mr. Dostey. "I saw a right big crowd around a school house, one day, and I thought maybe it was a lynching, so I run over to see the fun. Then I found it was just an election. But as long as I was there, I thought I might as well vote along with the rest of them. So I asked a man if I couldn't vote. He looked at me right sharp and says, "Do you know what a Democrat is?" I says, "I shorely do." "Do you know what a Republican is?" he says. "I says, No, I never heard about that." "All right," he says, "you can vote."

Mr. Podd shook his head. "That's the trouble with our poor country," he murmured. "It isn't only in the South they do that, David. They do the same thing in the North, only in other ways. There'll be none of that in the Coming State—and none in *our* State. You'll see how we do it."

"What's the Mayor going to do?" asked Dostey? "Is he the boss?"

Mr. Podd shuddered at the word "boss," but he knew that David was merely expressing his notion of leadership by this word, so he replied, "Oh, yes, a sort of boss. You'll see."

"Is Rumble going to run for Mayor?" asked David.

"Why, he may. Anybody may run."

"All right, I'll come," said David. "Only you've got to make Rumble keep his hands off me, you know."

That night David Dostey slept again under the shelter of the Communistic State. To do him justice, he was so silent and unobtrusive that the other pilgrims scarcely realized he was back among them. And, the

next morning, Mr. Podd was delighted to find that young Dostey had become eagerly interested in the election. The youth was going from one to another of the party, asking endless questions about the Moót. What were the duties of the Mayor? What were his privileges? Was he a sort of sheriff? How long was he going to be Mayor? Could womenfolks vote?

Mr. Podd rubbed his hands gleefully. "I tell you, Will," he said to his daughter, "this is the way the younger generation should be educated to their political duties—or rather their social duties, because there would be very little politics in our State. You see how Dostey's mind is stirred, when he sees that our little election is not controlled by bribery and greed and class hatreds, and the lust for authority! It means something to him now. He sees, perhaps as clearly as any of us, that it is a social obligation. He feels, even in his poor way, a responsibility."

"Perhaps better than I do," responded Willa, "because I'm going to vote for you, Bill, against the world."

"Well, that's a good pal; if you feel that I'm best fitted, I'm glad," replied Podd, with brightening eyes.

"Why, I'd vote for you, Bill, if you were the worst-fitted," said Willa.

"Oh, no; don't say that, Will! You shouldn't feel that way. That's exactly what we want to get away from."

"You won't get me away from voting for the man I love, dad," replied Willa, seizing her father and kissing him heartily. "You old dear!"

"Oh, well," said Mr. Podd, "I suppose there'll always be strong family influences, in any State.

They're not necessarily bad. Still," he added, as he squeezed her hand, "I ought really to have you disfranchised, Will. You know it. You're corrupting the election."

Of course, Mr. Podd spoke expansively. He didn't mean it. It cheered him immeasurably to realize how Willa felt toward him.

One by one, most of the other members of the party came to Mr. Podd and told him they felt that there was no need of an election. They were satisfied that the man who had instigated the pilgrimage might as well go on with it as he thought best. Captain Rumble was not among these, however. He said flatfootedly that he wasn't looking for office of any sort; but it was his duty to assume leadership of the party, unless he was utterly deserted by his charges. If they cared to desert their leader, of course they could. But for the present he would stand on international maritime law.

Even Mr. Waddick approached William Podd and said, "Well, Podd, you got us into this mess. Now the quicker you get us out the better. I've got my store in Grape City . . . I can't stay here . . . you know that . . . I'll vote for you, but for God's sake, man, do something!"

"I'll do all that can be done," promised Mr. Podd, unconscious of the fact that he was making a pre-election promise to one of the electorate.

The Great Council of the Podd Commonwealth was held beneath a clump of palms, which grew closely enough together to form a pleasant, shady polling-place. The Podd pilgrims, except Miss Frale, who refused to join her suffrage to the event, gathered in a circle.

There was something extremely solemn about this undertaking. In spite of the limited number of voters in the Commonwealth, there was considerable tension displayed. Young Dostey went around, whispering and asking questions a good deal. Mr. Loasby and Dr. Bodger went aside and held a long conference, which Dostey joined. Mrs. Tantruss and Miss Peebles were called into this caucus. Then the caucus adjourned suddenly, and all took their places and waited for Mr. Podd to speak.

Mr. Podd began by remarking that their purity of purpose ensured that great idea of a democracy—purity of election. There would be a time, he hoped, when elections would be unnecessary. Then purity of purpose of the individual would be enough. He thought that the vote for Mayor should be by a raising of hands.

"No, I'm for the ballot," interposed Dr. Bodger. "That's fairer. It's nobody's business how I vote. It's a personal matter."

"All those in favor of having a secret ballot raise their hands," said Mr. Podd. To his surprise, a clear majority was in favor of a secret ballot.

"Very well," assented Podd. "Will you provide every one with slips of paper, Mr. Pickbill?"

"There is another point," said Mr. Podd, while the ballots were being prepared, and several pencils dug from pockets, "and that is, what can constitute a sufficient number of votes for an election? It may be that the vote will not be very close, but we should be prepared for any emergency. Miss Frale is not with us. That means that, with Master Tantruss, who is surely entitled to a vote, I believe, because his welfare is at stake as much as anybody's, there are just thirteen

voters. Shall we say that seven votes are sufficient to elect?"

There was no objection to this. So it was agreed that seven votes should constitute a choice.

For several minutes after the ballots were passed, there was a good deal of cogitation and hesitation on the part of the pilgrims. Then, one by one, they folded their bits of paper and walked up and deposited them in the soup kettle which lay at Mr. Podd's feet. Mr. Podd himself, after a moment of thought, wrote hastily on his ballot, and dropped it into the kettle.

"I appoint Mr. Pickbill and Mr. Neale," said Podd, "to count the votes and announce the result."

Messrs. Pickbill and Neale went aside with the kettle. There was a deep silence. After what seemed to be an extremely long consultation, considering the practical simplicity of the election, Mr. Neale came back with a puzzled face and announced:

"I—I don't understand it. There—there is no choice. The votes stand as follows:

"Capt. Rumble 1
Dostey 6
Podd .....6"

Captain Rumble got up on his feet heavily and cried: "I suppose you'll all think I voted for myself! Well, I did! I don't care a hang about being Mayor, but I'm bound to—"

The Captain's voice was lost in the hubbub that followed. Mr. Podd, grasping the tabulation of votes which Neale had handed him, gazed upon it in amazement. *Dostey,* 6. There was no mistake about it. *Podd,* 6. No mistake about that. But why? How?

All were talking at once. The first Great Council was in an uproar.

Then Mr. Fink, unblushingly, drew from his pocket a large cigar, and lighted it with a match which he took from a whole box of safety matches. Dr. Bodger, seeing this barefaced act, drew from his pocket a cigar and lighted it, too. The smoke curled around, in the breezeless air, and the aroma was that of pure Havana. Captain Rumble sniffed the tantalizing scent. Then his cheeks grew purple, and he glowered at the two smokers and shook his fist.

"So that's where Dostey got his votes, is it?" shouted the Captain. "You—you corrupt scoundrels! You sold your votes to Dostey for tobacco."

"Good heavens!" cried Mr. Podd, with pale cheeks, "you don't mean that, Captain! You shouldn't say that! Dr. Bodger, Mr. Fink, you didn't—"

"Yes, I did!" said Pete Fink, boldly. "I haven't had a smoke for days, Podd. What difference does it make, anyway? This Dostey can do all we need done by a Mayor, anyway. Anyway, I've got to have a smoke! Anyway."

Mr. Fink felt that there was some force in the word "anyway," because he relied upon it heavily.

"I wouldn't have believed it!" gasped Mr. Podd, almost in tears.

"Oh, well, don't take it to heart, Podd," said Dr. Bodger, comfortingly, exhaling a great cloud of smoke with spectacular relish. "There's no harm done that I can see. Maybe it wasn't quite in order, but—well you're a smoker yourself. And you can't deny that the witless kid is pretty clever in his way."

"That's what people always say when a corrupt

politician is elected. They say, 'well, he was clever enough to win'," groaned Mr. Podd. Then he brightened a little. "I know you won't start our little commonwealth with this horrible mistake!" he exclaimed. "You've got time to change your mind. The election is still undecided. I will do the only thing possible. I will withdraw as a candidate. That will show I have no selfish interest. But I beg you to vote—out of your hearts—your conscience—"

"Let it go at that!" cried Captain Rumble, interrupting. "If they want what they want, Podd, let 'em have it. I voted for myself. I'm not ashamed of it, because you did, too, Podd. But I withdraw my vote for myself, and vote for Dostey. That settles it. That elects Dostey Mayor."

"You!" cried Podd, facing Captain Rumble, and paler than ever.

"Yes," replied Rumble. "I—I can't stand that tobacco smoke being blown in my face. It'll drive me crazy. Give me those cigars now, you whelp!" The last sentence was addressed to Dostey.

David approached gingerly and handed the Captain a fistful of cigars. Rumble grasped them wolfishly, bit the end from one, pulled out a much worn match from his pocket, which had been used as a tooth-pick for many days, and lighted up. As Rumble exhaled the first puff, Mr. Podd sat down abruptly, and buried his face in his hands.

"Shame, shame!" cried Willa Podd, to the smokers.

"And just think!" added Miss Peebles, "of the years and years when women were denied the vote by these creatures, who sell their rights for rolls of vile-smelling leaves! Why, they had the impudence to say that

women might bring disorder into politics. Pusillanimous, I call it!"

Miss Peebles looked straight at the Rev. Joseph Loasby as she spoke, and that former hero of hers, now dethroned, coughed over his cigar and looked exceedingly foolish. Miss Peebles went on, scathingly:

"And I don't know that it's just the men either. I've got my suspicions about certain people, too, who aren't far distant, and who are *not* men. At least, they're not wearing trousers." She glanced sharply in the direction of Mrs. Tantruss, and the New Thought lecturer began to look uncomfortable. Without mercy, Miss Peebles continued:

"Mr. Waddick, do you mind telling me whether you voted for Mr. Podd?"

Henry Waddick nodded. "I don't mind telling you I did," he answered. "Do you suppose I want Dostey for a leader? I want to get back to my grocery store—"

"*That* simplifies matters," interrupted Miss Peebles, triumphantly. "Now, I know where we stand! Mr. Podd didn't vote for Dostey; Miss Podd didn't; Mr. Neale didn't. That's three. I didn't vote for Dostey; Mr. Waddick didn't; and I know Mr. Pickbill didn't. That's six. Rumble voted for himself, first time; and that leaves six. So, Mrs. Tantruss, you voted for Dostey! And I dare you to deny it!"

Mrs. Tantruss flushed heavily, and cowered under the steady gaze of the poetess. Then she shrugged her shoulders defiantly. At the same time she deliberately took a powder puff from her handbag, extracting a tin of talcum powder from the same source, and dusted her nose and cheeks.

"If you want to know, Miss Peebles," said Mrs. Tantruss, I did vote for Dostey, and it's none of your business. If this party is weak-minded enough to let that boy steal all the face powder, then he may as well be Mayor as not. I'm not going around this island with a face like Santa Claus. Look at your own face! Goodness knows, you'll vote for Dostey twice before you're through."

"I would not sell my vote for all the powder in the world: not if I were to be tanned black as an Indian," retorted Miss Peebles.

"Well, you haven't any complexion to protect," replied Mrs. Tantruss, sweetly. "I have. That's the difference."

Mrs. Tantruss stood up as she made this remark, to be better prepared for emergencies. But Mr. Podd intervened, and saved the commonwealth from the disgrace of another assault and battery, so early in its career.

"Well, now that you are Mayor," said Mr. Podd to Dostey, "of course you'll bring back those things you took, and put them in the common store, won't you? You know we own everything in common, David. There is no private property now, except as regards our clothing and very personal effects."

Young Dostey considered the matter doubtfully. But it sounded reasonable, so he volunteered to go to his hiding-place and restore the pilfered articles. When he returned laden with his spoils, a select committee saw that they were put safely away. And, as a peace offering, Dostey came to Mr. Podd and held out to him several cigars, which he had retained in his pocket. Podd shook his head, gloomily.

"No," he said, firmly, "after seeing what tobacco has done here, I feel that I shall never smoke again."

"Bravo, Mr. Podd," shouted Miss Peebles. "At least, there's one man strong enough to resist temptation."

"That's all right for you to say. You don't smoke," said Pete Fink.

Mr. Podd looked longingly at the cigars. The Havana odor circled around his head and assailed his nostrils. He recalled that he had paid forty cents apiece, wholesale, for these cigars. He remembered that this particular brand had always been his favorite. He wondered whether they would have the same mild, but zesty flavor, after his enforced abstinence.

William Podd looked at his daughter, appealingly. Willa knew that her judgment was being asked for. "Oh, I wish you'd take them, father," she said quickly. "I know just how you feel about the principle of the thing, but I also know that you think better and clearer after smoking, when your nerves have been strung tightly. And we all need your very best thoughts. I think you ought to smoke them for our sakes."

"Do you really?" asked Podd, taking one of the cigars and looking at it thoughtfully.

"Yes," lied Willa, womanfully.

"Then perhaps it would be just as well," said Mr. Podd. He took out his cigar-end clipper, and neatly severed the tip of the wrapper. Then he lighted the cigar. After a few puffs, the manufacturer of nozzles said:

"By George, Will, you were right. My head feels clearer already." Miss Peebles turned away in disgust. She had lost the last of her gods.

Some of Mr. Podd's deep disappointment left him, as he smoked. By evening, with the help of another cigar, the manufacturer was almost his optimistic self again. He had begun to see a new and wonderful possibility. It might be, he considered, that this experience, as Mayor, would be the making of Dostey—in which case, it could be said that the commonwealth had served a great purpose immediately. The more Podd thought of this, the more obvious it became. He began to think that all communistic governments should be led, at first, by the least intelligent. The reason was, that the less intelligent the leader, the less likely he was to relapse into that capitalistic, old-fashioned state of mind. Dostey had never learned anything; consequently he had nothing to forget. He was the very material, unspoiled and plastic, out of which to create the true communistic State.

Mr. Podd became more and more enthusiastic about this, the more he thought of it. Also, he was greatly cheered, that evening, by the simple, encouraging words of Julius Pickbill.

Pickbill recalled that this election, on the island, was a good deal like one he had known in Dover, New Hampshire.

"In Dover, some years ago," said Mr. Pickbill, "we had a sort of reform movement. Things had got pretty bad. I don't mean there was any great corruption; but the city government got into the hands of professional politicians who ran things just about as they pleased. I was something of a reformer those days, myself, and we got our heads together and decided that we'd nominate some man who had never been in politics at all, and who would dedicate himself solely

to the public good. Well, you know it isn't easy to get that sort of man to run for office."

"I know it isn't," replied Mr. Podd. "Politics has become such a dirty, mud-slinging process that decent men don't want to go into it."

"Just so," replied Mr. Pickbill. "We canvassed a good many prominent men and they all told us just that thing. They said they weren't going to be mixed up in an election, and have their names and their families dragged through the mire. One after another our prominent men failed us, till at last we had only one man left on our list. We had very little hope of getting him. He was the president of a bank, and the superintendent of a Sunday school, and a man who never mixed much with the common people. I was one of a committee of three who waited on this man, and asked him to run for Mayor."

"And did he?" asked Mr. Podd, breathlessly.

"Yes. To our joy and surprise, he said he would sacrifice himself for the cause. We could hardly help from giving three hearty cheers right there in his library. We promised to ring every door-bell in the city, for him, and get out a record vote. We got thousands of signatures on his papers. I don't remember how it happened, but we got more signatures than there were people in Dover. Of course, there may have been duplicates. Anyway, we scared those professional politicians to death. People said that the end of machine government had come. The newspapers were solid for us. We had our posters in every store in the city. I think the betting was ten to one in favor of our man."

"Naturally, he was elected," said Mr. Podd, with a sigh of satisfaction.

"No. That's the funny part of it. He only got six hundred votes. You see our folks, the nice folks of the city, favored our man, but they didn't go to the polls on election day. In fact I forgot to vote, myself. I was busy at my restaurant. So the regular politicians won."

"But what's the point? I don't see the point," murmured Mr. Podd.

"Why, I don't know that there is any point. Let me see, was there any point? Oh, yes; it's this: After election, our reform candidate disappeared from the city, and took almost all the bank's money with him, and also the daughter of one of his neighbors. He's never been heard of since. The point is, I think, that everything is for the best."

"I see," said Mr. Podd. "Yes, I suppose that's so. Everything is for the best."

"I heard that story you were telling my father," said Willa Podd to Pickbill, afterward. "Is it true?"

"No," replied Pickbill. "I made it up—but I saw your father was a bit down-hearted and I wanted to cheer him."

"It was mighty fine of you, Mr. Pickbill," said Willa. "Only, I have to say, candidly, I don't see why dad should be cheered up by it."

XIX

David Dostey, having been elected Mayor of the Podd Commonwealth, inducted himself into office without delay.

"The first thing," said Mr. Dostey, looking around paternally upon his constituency, "is to build a jail."

"A jail?" cried Mr. Podd, amid general laughter. "Oh, you don't mean that, David. Of all things in the world, a jail is what we don't need. Under our communistic plan, there will be no need for jails."

Dostey shook his head firmly. "I know all about those things," he said. "We-all have got to have a jail. All towns have jails. My pappy told me that the very first house built in our town was the jail, and it's the peartest building there now. My pappy says that jails ought to be the comfortablest places nowadays, too, because since Prohibition came in, you don't never know who's going to occupy them."

There was a silence, during which Dostey applied himself to the task of thinking of something else that should be done under his leadership.

"As soon as you get the jail built," he went on, "you can put Rumble and Freddie Tantruss into it. And keep 'em there."

Captain Rumble snorted with disdain; but Master Tantruss, who took his late playmate's elevation more seriously, burst out in alarmed protest. "What's the

matter with you, Dostey?" yelled Freddie. Haven't we been friends? Haven't we played together all the time?"

"Sure we have," admitted Dostey. "That's why you've got to go to jail. I've got no hard feelings against you, Freddie, but you've been my closest friend, and you'd get too familiar with me, now that I'm king——"

"Not King!" said Mr. Podd, sternly. "Don't be absurd, David. Merely a temporary leader."

"Well, I don't care what you call it," replied David. "I'm boss, anyway, because I'm elected. I want Rumble and Freddie put in jail, and I'm going to marry Miss Podd and Miss Peebles——"

"That settles it!" shouted Waddick, in disgust. "I want an end to this farce, Podd! This is tomfoolery! I want you to be the leader of this party, and I'll recognize nobody else."

Mr. Podd replied, "We've elected Dostey, fairly and squarely. It wouldn't be right." Then he turned to the new Mayor and said, persuasively: "You've got the wrong idea of your position, David. You won't have anything to do with making laws, or anything like that. You're just nominally the leader."

"Can't I run things to suit myself?" asked David.

"Of course not," replied Mr. Podd.

Mr. Dostey considered the matter a moment. Then he said, "Well, you can have your old job, then! I don't want it. What's the use of being mayor if you can't boss anybody around?"

"Dostey has resigned!" shouted Henry Waddick. "We look to you, now, Podd. No more of that elec-

tion nonsense! I want to get back to my grocery store——"

The rest of the party acquiesced in this decision. So young Mr. Dostey, after a very brief term in office, went and sat aside in deep thought. Finally he said:

"You done skinned me, you-all have! I want my tobacco back!"

But the tobacco and toilet accessories had already gone into the common stock, which was now under the eagle eye of Henry P. Waddick, so Dostey had to be satisfied with the honor of being an ex-Mayor.

XX

"Now," said Mr. Podd, "there are two things which we shall have to decide at once. I think you will all agree that we have rather neglected ourselves in the matter of hygienic diet. We mustn't go on this way. It will bring on sickness. Our cooking——"

"Cooking!" roared Capt. Rumble. "Cooking! You don't call opening tin-cans cooking, do you? And those slops we've been calling coffee—they're giving me stomach trouble. What we want is cooking—some real food."

"The best food in the world, and the only fit food, is right there in the forest!" said Dr. Bodger, ardently.

"Well, you go ahead and eat it. I want man's food," replied the Captain. "First thing you know, Bodger, you'll be twittering, and running around with feathers and horsehair in your mouth, building a nest with it. Anyway, *I* can't eat bird seed. I want food."

"Well, that means that we must appoint a cook," said Mr. Podd, "and it's only fair that the cook should have no other duties. Who would like to be cook? Volunteers are called for!"

Willa Podd spoke: "If I could cook decently, I'd like nothing better than to cook for you all," she said. "I'm ashamed to say I don't know the first thing about cooking. I don't know whether that's your fault or

mine, father. I expect we'll have to share the blame, won't we? If we ever get back home, I promise the very first thing to learn how to cook."

"That's all right," said Waddick. "But meanwhile, we've got to eat, Miss Podd, and we can't eat good intentions. How about you, Miss Peebles?"

"It's no use to ask me," replied that lady. "When I was at home, we had all our work done by negroes. And after coming to Greenwich Village, there are so many delicatessens and Italian restaurants——"

"Well, that lets her out," said Waddick, quickly. I won't mention Mrs. Tantruss, because she can't boil water without scorching it. She——"

"I've had higher aspirations in life than cooking food for selfish men," said Mrs. Tantruss with dignity. "I——"

The Rev. Joseph Loasby interrupted. "I should like to be of service," he said. "I once went camping, and made some pancakes. Everybody said they were very good."

"Yes, I know that kind of cooking," said Waddick. "When you're out camping, anything taste's good. You don't even bother to pick the bark and gnats out of your food. I don't think you qualify as a cook, brother."

Mr. Waddick turned and gazed at Julius Pickbill expectently.

Mr. Pickbill modestly addressed his fellow pilgrims: "I shall be very glad to do the best I can, in an emergency," he said. "I know how to cook. If you don't mind plain food——"

"Why, of course, of course," said Mr. Podd, warmly. "Naturally, you know all about such things,

Mr. Pickbill. We overlooked the ideal cook. Well, that's settled—now comes a more delicate problem. There is the matter of menial service. By menial service I mean those things which are less pleasant than other things. In the ideal State, the number of these unpleasant services will be greatly limited. Still, they will exist. We have spoken of this matter once before, when we were on board our ship."

"You mean washing dishes, and such?" asked Mr. Pickbill.

"Yes."

Mr. Podd warmed up to the subject. It was one of the foundation blocks of the communistic structure. "You see, my friends," he went on, "under the capitalistic system—the system of rent, profit and class hatred—the performance of unpleasant—relatively unpleasant—tasks becomes a soul-depressing matter. Into such tasks are swept poor unfortunates who have suffered reverses, or who have been neglected in the swift rush for money and place. What wonder that they hate those above them, with unquenchable malignity? Can you blame them?

"How would it be under our communistic State? We shall make such services as little distasteful as possible. Grant that they will still not be in themselves attractive. That shall be answered in two ways; in the first place, the common judgment will declare these tasks *noble* and *patriotic*. To be a dishwasher in our State will be like being a Duke or a Prince in a monarchy. We shall throw such a glamor over dishwashing that the job of washing dishes will be eagerly sought for. Perhaps we shall find a waiting-list necessary.

"But if the honor and nobility of such jobs is not sufficient, at least we shall give greater rewards, in one form or another, to those who perform them. I don't know exactly what form these rewards will take, in a great Communistic State. In our little enclave perhaps the dishwasher, if a man, will get two cigars instead of one, or if a woman, a large issue of whatever rations she likes best, from the common stock. You see the idea. Finally, though, I believe the spirit of service will be sufficient without any rewards whatever."

"Splendid!" shouted the Rev. Joseph Loasby. "Well spoken, Mr. Podd."

"Now we are getting somewhere!" chimed in Mrs. Tantruss. Miss Peebles nodded her affirmation, with shining eyes. Of all words, the poetess loved "service" best. It meant much to her.

"Well, we are all getting hungry," interjected Mr. Pickbill, "and I'll see what I can cook for the next meal. I see the utensils are limited; so you'll have to overlook any little faults."

While Mr. Pickbill was busy with the preparations for dinner, the pilgrims discussed further this matter of menial service. They agreed that service was a wonderful thing—the spirit of brotherly helpfulness. It seemed to them, as they sat there in conference, that if this were the only rock in the channel, their ship of State would sail triumphantly through, and come to port with colors flying.

Later, the pilgrims sat down to the first real meal since they left *The Future*. In addition to a dozen tasty dishes, Mr. Pickbill set before them a huge platter of freshly fried doughnuts, of the sort for

which he was famous throughout Southern New Hampshire.

With eyes that danced in lively appreciation of their applause for this culinary triumph, Mr. Pickbill remarked, with simple pride:

"To get doughnuts absolutely right, you have to have good lard. Some folks say they can be made with substitutes. I don't see it. That's why I was so glad to see that firkin of lard among the goods the sailors put ashore."

"Hurrah for Pickbill and his doughnuts!" cried Henry P. Waddick, to the astonishment of everyone. It was the first message of joy that had come from the grocer, since his association with the party. Mr. Waddick munched his ninth doughnut thoughtfully, and heaved a sigh. "My wife makes good doughnuts, Pickbill," he announced, "but I'll say it like a truthful man—to you, not to *her*—you've got her licked."

"Oh, no," replied Pickbill, modestly.

"Oh, yes," cried Willa Podd. "They're wonderful, Mr. Pickbill. How do you do it?"

"I like to make doughnuts," replied Julius Pickbill, quite unaware that he was giving the precise reason for the excellence of the pastry.

After dinner, the pilgrims strolled away, one after another, to reflect and bask in the sunshine of their cheerful thoughts. They all felt better. Even Dr. Bodger, who had eaten his usual fruit and nuts, seemed to have caught some of the cheer dispensed by Pickbill and his mixing-spoon.

As there appeared to be nobody anxious to win honor and knighthood from a communistic State, by washing the greasy dishes, Mr. Pickbill did the job him-

self. He was used to it. He did it almost mechanically. If anybody noticed that he was doing it, they made no comment.

The days passed, thereafter, and found Pickbill not only cooking for the pilgrims, but also doing the dishes and clearing away the refuse. Once in a while somebody said, "Oh, we must do the dishes, today." But nobody did. Later, someone would put the thing in a slightly different form:

"We must really *help* Mr. Pickbill with the dishes today." But it did not occur. Of course, that made no difference to Mr. Pickbill. After all there is a close resemblance between failing to do something, and failing to help somebody do it.

If the performance of menial services endowed anybody with the laurel-wreath of patriotism, in the Podd Commonwealth, Mr. Pickbill's brow was a constant mass of leaves.

XXI

Mr. Podd and Mr. Waddick, who were both business men, though far removed from each other in the scope of their business activities, and even farther removed in their attitude toward business, were discussing David Dostey's shrewdness in plundering the common stores of just those things—tobacco and matches and toilet accessories—which could be used later in forcing the Podd party to accede to his terms.

"What David did," said Mr. Podd, "was to create a monopoly. In fact, when we consider it, Dostey did no worse than our great capitalistic combinations, who achieve monopolies of public necessaries, and then charge for them all the traffic will bear."

"But Dostey produced nothing," insisted Mr. Waddick, warmly. "He simply stole the tobacco and matches."

"Well, I don't know about that," replied Mr. Podd, thoughtfully. "When the crew of *The Future* left us here on the island, and put those supplies down on the beach, we became pioneers in a new country, and those supplies were natural resources. It seems to me that Dostey, in taking what he could of the natural resources, was simply doing what the men did in our country at home, when they gobbled up all the coal and iron and petroleum. In other words, while we were talking, Dostey was acting. He staked out his claim first."

"I regard him as a common thief," said Mr. Waddick, unconvinced, "and I wonder that a business man like you can talk that way, Mr. Podd."

"I am a business man," admitted William Podd, "because the silly laws of private property permit me to control the nozzle business and force everyone to pay me toll, if they want to use nozzles. As long as people are so short-sighted as that, I shall take my toll. But I don't feel myself any better than Dostey. In fact, I've been thinking that if we ever get back to Poddsville, I shall take Dostey into my employ."

"You're crazy!" cried Waddick. "Why I wouldn't let him rustle nail-kegs for me. He's *non compos.*"

"Perhaps so, and perhaps not. I've heard that in many such cases as Dostey's, the trouble is caused by a bone pressing on some part of the brain, due to a fall during childhood. Children fall a good deal more than their parents remember. It depends where the bone is pressing, whether Dostey would be a safe employee. If it is pressing in such a way that he would look out for his employer's interest, he'd be an ideal employee. Modern business calls for a good many Dosteys of that sort. But if the bone is pressing in such a manner as to make him shrewd merely in his own interest, then of course he wouldn't be a good employee."

"I don't follow you, Podd," said Mr. Waddick, complainingly. "I don't follow you at all. You get my mind all twisted up. I couldn't run my grocery store on any such notions as that."

"No, probably not," admitted the manufacturer. "Very likely I couldn't have built the nozzle business on such notions, either. But after you get a great business going, you can become a philosopher. To tell

you the truth, Waddick, I'm sick of business, anyway. I think the world is going to the devil through too much business. It would be better if we were all farmers. The ideal communistic state will be a state mainly of agriculture—at least everyone will be capable of tilling the soil, and then will add craftsmanship and art and such things to their abilities because they'll have the leisure to develop them. And—"

Mr. Podd suddenly clapped his hands. "By George!" he cried, "I've been forgetting my seeds. I wonder if they were put ashore with the other things!"

"Seeds? What seeds?" asked Mr. Waddick.

"My garden seeds. I don't suppose you know, Waddick, that my hobby is gardening. Before I left home, I packed a good supply of vegetable and flower seeds in a box—let's see, it was an old box that had contained tins of cocoa—and it was in my room on the ship. Oh, if those men have only put it ashore. So much depends on it!"

Mr. Podd rose and fairly ran down the beach, in the direction he had seen Albert Neale taking, a few minutes before. Having caught up with his secretary, he told Neale to look carefully through the common supplies, for such a cocoa box as he described; and if he found such a box, to call a meeting of the pilgrims at once.

By good fortune, Neale found the box of seeds without delay. It had been put ashore by Potchkin and his comrades, along with most of the articles found in Mr. Podd's stateroom. Soon afterwards, the pilgrims were brought together and another council was held.

"My friends," began Mr. Podd, holding up the box of garden seeds, "I entirely forgot what I believe is

the most important feature of our community life. This box of seeds, which I took with me to distribute among other amateur gardeners like myself, around the world, and to exchange for such varieties as they might have—may be the very salvation of our little commonwealth."

"Nonsense!" said Dr. Bodger. "There's fruit and nuts enough growing wild on the island, to keep us forever in proper nourishment. In a pound of these nuts," added the doctor, fishing a handful from his coat pocket, "there are 1654 calories. There are—"

"Excuse me," went on Mr. Podd, "but I wasn't thinking that we should starve. I was thinking of the necessity of basing our communistic State upon an agricultural foundation. Every successful communistic enclave must be based on agriculture, I am certain. If we go about merely picking fruits from wild trees, we shall become no better than savages. The highest type of human culture ever known, was the product of tillers of the soil. To prepare the ground, to plant seeds, to care for them, and reap the harvest, is an epic song—"

"Beautiful!" cried Miss Peebles, ecstatically. "That is pure poetry, Mr. Podd."

"Oh, no," deprecated the nozzle manufacturer, modestly. "I am no poet, Miss Peebles. But I am an enthusiast. And I know that a happy farming community is the one best suited to demonstrate our theory of government—or no-government, if you please."

"It is wonderful," put in Mr. Loasby, "to cultivate a garden. It is to become part of the Life Force. To see the sprouting of the seed, to see it fructify into the

bounteous harvest—how soon can we begin, Mr. Podd?"

"Oh, do let's begin at once!" added Mrs. Tantruss. "I have lectured so many times about the likeness between rearing the child, and cultivating the field of growing things—I know I shall be happy if I can only work in our gardens."

"It sounds good, and I'll take a crack at it," said Mr. Fink. "I raised some good tomatoes once, in Sandusky—but the neighbors stole 'em."

"Merely the profit-taking instinct," said Mr. Podd.

"I suppose so. But I got even with them, anyway," replied Pete Fink. "I stole their apples and pears. And I took two for one, or better, too."

Mr. Podd looked pained, but said nothing.

"But to have a garden, you need hoes and rakes and spades and that sort of thing, and we haven't got those," said Albert Neale.

Podd's face dropped a little. "I hadn't thought of that, he confessed. "We have only two axes and a hammer and saw. And those won't do."

"I believe I could make some wooden garden tools which would do well enough if the soil isn't too stiff, offered Pickbill. "I've always been handy at those things."

"If you could!" gasped Mr. Podd, reviving. "Even if they weren't much to look at, just so long as we could work the soil with them!"

"But there doesn't seem to be any place to plant," went on Julius Pickbill, who had looked around comprehensively. "I'm afraid we'll have to clear a place in the woods, and that's hard work."

"Oh, we'd make nothing of that," retorted Mr.

Loasby. "Why, just give me the axe, and I'll have you a cleared spot in no time." There happened to be an axe lying near the meeting-place, and the clergyman seized it and swung it with such grace and abandon that the ladies of the party felt glad that he was with the party. It seemed impossible that any harm could come to a group which included an axe-swinger like Loasby.

Mr. Pickbill shook his head, doubtfully, but did not discourage this pastoral aspiration.

"I think, if we are going to do the thing properly," said Albert Neale, the man of method, "we ought to know exactly what we are going to do, and set a time for getting it done. For instance, how much land should we clear and plant?"

"I should say ten acres," remarked Mr. Loasby, promptly.

"Ten acres!" echoed Pickbill, with a whistle. "That's a good sized piece of land, Mr. Loasby. Do you know how much ten acres is?"

Mr. Loasby was nettled. "I ought to," he said. "An acre is—about—well—I can't exactly say in square feet, but it's—I think we all know about how much an acre is. I'm sure we should have ten acres."

"Oh, will ten acres be enough?" said Mrs. Tantruss. "We want enough to give each one of us a chance to express one's self."

"An acre apiece ought to be enough," concluded Mr. Podd. "Really, I don't think there are enough seeds to plant all that ground. But we could make up the difference by transplanting wild fruit trees and hybridizing for new species. Who knows but we could

originate some new fruits which would even outdo the wonderful discoveries of Burbank?"

"Oh, could we *really* do that?" cried Miss Peebles. "How wonderful!"

"I can hardly restrain myself," said Mr. Loasby. "Let me have one of the axes, and I'll begin right now. Where shall we have our gardens?"

Mr. Pickbill, who had left the party, was just returning, with his hands full of moist, warm earth. "I've been digging, here and there," he explained, "and so far as I can see, it all looks like very good soil. So I suppose the nearer to our camp we make our clearing, the better?"

"Good!" exclaimed Mr. Loasby, taking a few practice swings with the axe, which nearly decapitated Mr. Waddick and caused him to be earnestly profane, "I'll tackle it this moment."

Julius Pickbill followed the clergyman in the direction of the woods, and suggested, pleasantly: "I just wanted to say, Mr. Loasby, that if you're not in practice with an axe, you'd better take it easily at first. I wouldn't swing too hard, or too often."

"I know all about that," replied Mr. Loasby, with a tinge of contempt.

The undergrowth was so thickly matted, to the very edge of the forest, that it took Mr. Loasby the better part of an hour to clear his way to the nearest tree. In doing so, the axe repeatedly became entangled in briers and creeping vines, which seemed as tough as cold-drawn wires. Yet they had a way of breaking unexpectedly and lassooing the clergyman, sometimes around the neck, sometimes around the arms, and trying to impale him upon their long thorns.

By dint of extraordinary persistence, however, Mr. Loasby succeeded in clearing his way to the tree he had selected as his first victim—a distance of nearly seven feet, in all. Having laid aside the vines, to open the way for powerful swings, the clergyman rubbed his hands, clenched the axe, and took aim at the tree trunk, about two inches from the ground. The whole Podd party paused from their work to see this first attack upon the primeval.

The axe rose in the air, describing a quick curve, and accompanied by a hissing outgo of breath, descended with great force. Had Mr. Loasby struck his mark fairly, he would have sunk the blade of the axe well toward the heart of the tree. But, somehow, he overreached, so that the heel of the axe glanced only lightly against the part of the tree which was farthest from him. The tendency of the axe, therefore, was to go *around* the tree, instead of through it; and as Mr. Loasby had a stout grip on the handle, which he felt in duty bound not to loosen, the journeying axe carried the clergyman with it. The Podd pilgrims saw the clergyman suddenly dive head first into the undergrowth, and disappear from human view.

A cry of pain informed the pilgrims of the whereabouts of Mr. Loasby. He had landed in a mass of peculiarly ferocious thorn-bushes, which caught him in a hundred places, and held him fast. "Help me out!" he cried, indignantly, as though the rest of the party had somehow pushed him in.

"Stay quiet!" ordered Mr. Pickbill, who possessed the only other axe. "I'll cut in towards you as fast as I can. Have you still got your axe?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"See if you can pass it out to us."

In a few moments, a swaying of the dense underbrush indicated that the end of the axe handle was being pushed toward Pickbill. But it took a full half-hour to rescue the clergyman.

"This is going to be more difficult clearing than we thought," commented Mr. Podd. "I should think half an acre apiece would be ample for all our needs."

The rest of the pilgrims, except Mr. Pickbill and Mr. Waddick, had become so fatigued, and so nervously upset by the misadventure of Joseph Loasby, that they retired to the camp, and discussed the various products of the soil which they would raise. To start the thing properly, Mr. Neale got a large sheet of paper, and made a map of the clearing, with the plots assigned to each citizen clearly marked upon it.

"Now," said Mr. Podd, "one of the foundation principles of our State is, that a good deal of individual liberty of action will accrue to everyone. For instance, I intend to specialize on asters. I realize that we can't eat asters; but I love them, and it will delight me to supply everyone with their beautiful blooms. Of course, I shall raise vegetables, too. Now, Capt. Rumble, there, may feel differently, altogether. He may prefer to experiment with garden peas . . ."

"You hit my weakness," admitted Rumble, complacently. "I do like fresh peas, with plenty of butter and milk on them."

"Well, there you are," continued Podd. "Rumble will naturally specialize on peas. We shall naturally get back to the old idea of barter. Rumble would have more peas than he could use, and Mr. Fink would have more carrots—"

"Oh, damn carrots!" cried Pete Fink. "I don't like carrots."

"I don't mean you *must* raise carrots. I only suggested carrots as an example. If you raised carrots, you could easily exchange with somebody who had cabbages, for instance."

The conversation became delightful. "I think I'd rather do gardening than anything else in the world," volunteered Miss Peebles. "It's such clean work. The soil is so pure and holy."

At this juncture Mr. Pickbill returned with Mr. Waddick. Mr. Pickbill's duties of cooking called him from his pioneering; and Mr. Waddick, whose hands were blistered, returned to keep Mr. Pickbill company.

"Really, Mr. Podd," said Pickbill, "I think even half an acre apiece will be more than we can take care of. If you don't mind my saying it, I think an acre for the whole party will be all we can take care of. You see, I was born on a farm."

"Only one acre for us all!" sniffed Miss Peebles. "That's absurd!"

"Well, if we started with an acre, then we could increase as we saw fit," insisted Pickbill.

"But I've got our maps all drawn," objected Neale.

"Well, of course, it's for you all to decide," remarked Pickbill, as he prepared to get dinner.

Several days passed, during which Julius Pickbill, by working far into the night, with the aid of a full moon, turned out some rough but usable wooden implements that bore a whispering resemblance to spades and hoes. Pickbill had found by investigation that the soil was friable, blackish loam, full of the accumulated humus of ages.

After ten days, however, the only cleared space was a plot about twenty feet square, all of which, except the first few bushes, had been cleared by Pickbill and Waddick. Day after day, the pilgrims sat and viewed with enthusiasm the maps which Albert Neale made of their agricultural operations. It was amazing, now that they had begun to talk agriculture, what a fund of special knowledge each one had, concerning the wonders of Nature. And they ended by agreeing with Mr. Loasby that, to till the soil was to grasp the great Life Force itself.

Still, at the end of another week, Mr. Pickbill announced that the cleared spot was only twenty-five feet square, and mildly inquired whether it wouldn't be a good plan for the rest to join him and Waddick in the clearing operations. Thus stimulated, the whole party sallied forth and worked twenty minutes. Then Miss Peebles, who had come for the first time to grips with the Life Force, said:

"We've got a nice little garden to start with. Why not test our seeds before we clear any more ground?"

"It might be a good idea," assented Mr. Podd, glancing at his reddened hands. "After all, six hundred square feet is capable of producing a good deal."

However, although the twenty-five yards square was cleared, it was not all spaded up. Only a small area of freshly turned soil showed where Pickbill had perspired over the mass of tangled roots.

"I don't want to say anything unkind," confided Miss Peebles to Mr. Loasby, one afternoon, "But what in the world do Pickbill and Waddick do up there in our garden? Every time I go up there, with my package of nasturtiums, expecting to be able to plant,

I find they've only spaded up another little place no larger than a handkerchief."

"Well, now that you mention it," replied Loasby, confidentially, sitting up from his reclining position against a palm tree, "I wouldn't want this to go any farther, because the man has some good traits, but—*Pickbill is a failure.* I've heard all about him. He's never succeeded at anything."

"Well, that explains it, of course," said Miss Peebles.

Had the Podd party been able to get their seeds into the ground, the seeds would have undoubtedly made an astonishing growth. The combination of tropical heat, with afternoon showers, makes for prodigious stimulation of plant life. But as the Podd farmers—the nucleus of a communistic commonwealth based upon free tillers of the soil—had a good many things to discuss, the natural wild growth obliterated the efforts of Pickbill and Waddick faster than they could prepare the soil. Finally, Pickbill and Waddick gave it up. One morning, by agreement, they decided to refrain from going up to the prospective gardens, and see whether the rest of the pilgrims would notice the default.

Nobody did. But perhaps this was because a new and important matter of State policy had arisen—a dispute about private property.

XXII

After the resignation of David Dostey, William Podd had become *de facto* the leader of the Podd Commonwealth. No vote had been taken as to this leadership. It was rather by tacit consent; and no doubt the reason why the communists were quite willing to have it so, was because, as Mr. Pickbill remarked to Miss Podd, they intended to do as they pleased, anyway; but in case they got into trouble by doing as they pleased, it would be convenient to have some leader to hold responsible.

On his side, Mr. Podd regarded this position with great sincerity, as one of trust and faith. He was not the man to abuse such confidence. Being a man of small appetites, he willingly took less than his share from the common store.

But the question of what constituted private property, or personal property, as distinct from the common fund, was bound to arise sooner or later, and Mr. Podd had tried to provide for the problem in a series of conferences, at which all the pilgrims were invited to give their opinion.

It had been more or less agreed, by the radicals, that there *was* a sharply defined line between what the colony owned and what the individual owned. That is, by common agreement, Mrs. Tantruss' shoes were her own shoes, and Mr. Podd's hat was

his own hat. The community had no claim on these articles. Mr. Podd might be generous enough to lend his hat, but it was to be regarded as a loan.

On the other hand, the tins of preserved peaches belonged to the community. The wooden shelters belonged to the commonwealth. If Mr. Waddick found a nest of turtle eggs in the sand, he was bound to put it into the common larder, because he was sharing the common benefits, and eating from the general store. In addition, Mr. Podd thought that whatever articles of craftsmanship were made by the community, should belong to the whole party.

This distinction was clear enough. But it made no provision for the unfortunate fact that Miss Peebles was in the habit of losing her side-combs.

Miss Pansy Peebles, the poetess, had probably possessed, in her forty-one years of life, more side-combs than any other living woman. This was partly due to the fact that when she was composing poetry, she walked rapidly for long distances, and recited her lines with sundry jerks of the head, which threw her side-combs away; and partly to the fact that her hair was thin.

When the pilgrims were put ashore on the island, Miss Peebles possessed just two side-combs, out of the dozens she had sailed with from New York. Mrs. Tantruss, whose hair was more abundant, and who did not jerk her head about, had six.

When Miss Peebles recited away her two last combs, her hair came down around her ears, which annoyed her. She appealed to Mrs. Tantruss for the loan of two combs. Mrs. Tantruss refused, on the ground

that if she wanted them thrown away on the beach, she could throw them away herself.

Miss Peebles complained to Mr. Podd that Mrs. Tantruss was holding as personal property several side-combs which should be put into the common store. Mr. Podd deliberated a long time on this, and finally gave it as his opinion that side-combs might be properly classed as personal property. Miss Peebles appealed from this decision, as she had a right to do; and a meeting of the moot was held to hear the appeal. After hearing the arguments, the council voted, seven to one—the others not voting—that side-combs were not common property.

The next morning, Miss Peebles appeared with two new side-combs, and oddly enough, on the same morning, two side-combs were missing from Mrs. Tantruss' suit-case.

Queerly enough, the very same evening, Mr. Loasby took Dr. Bodger's wicker chair, moved it over to his side of the shelter, and persisted in occupying it, without regard to the protest of the dietician.

"You can't expect to have this chair all the time," said the Rev. Loasby, firmly. "This is the only good chair in the colony. My back is getting lame, sitting on the sand without anything to lean against. I claim we should all use this chair in turns. And it's my turn."

"I got that chair first!" cried Dr. Bodger, with a red face. "I took that chair when we all took what we could carry. Where are the chocolate candies *you* took, that morning?"

"I ate them," replied Mr. Loasby, simply.

"Did you give me any?" persisted Dr. Bodger.

"No, because you don't eat them. You eat nuts."

"Rot!" shouted Bodger. "You didn't give anybody any of those chocolates. That's just a feeble excuse."

"I beg your pardon," replied Mr. Loasby, stiffly. "I gave Miss Peebles one—with a green filling."

"And now you want my chair, after gormandizing all those poisons!" said the doctor. "Not much, you don't!" And the doctor laid hold of the chair and began to pull it along the ground with the clergyman still sitting in it.

"Let go! Let go, I tell you!" cried Loasby, bringing his fist down smartly on the doctor's fingers.

Again, Mr. Podd interfered to prevent combat. "Please, please, my friends!" he cried, taking each struggler by the arm. "Do you realize that in less than one month of our little commonwealth, we have had two cases of assault and battery already? Shame on you both! I'm—I'm surprised. Can't we arbitrate a little thing like that?"

"No, you can't arbitrate *my* chair," howled Bodger. "You can arbitrate Loasby's watch, if you want to, but not my chair. I saw it first. It's mine."

"You could make a little sacrifice, you could be a hero," suggested Mr. Podd. "Heroism is made of just such sacrifices as this, Dr. Bodger."

"Well," replied the doctor, stubbornly, "I don't want to be the only hero here. I don't like to be conspicuous."

"Then we shall have to take a vote on it tomorrow morning," said Mr. Podd firmly. "It must be decided by vote." Mr. Podd did not know at that moment that there would have to be a vote on the alleged

theft of two side-combs, also. Nor did he foresee that in another twelve hours a controversy of even greater import would develop between Mr. Waddick and Mr. Fink.

In the morning the great council of the Commonwealth was called, after breakfast. Mr. Podd, with a grave face, as one who clearly understood that deep issues were being tested, stated the case fairly for both Dr. Bodger and Mrs. Tantruss, and for Mr. Loasby and Miss Peebles.

As to Dr. Bodger's chair, or rather the chair which Dr. Bodger claimed, it was voted that the chair was clearly common property, and should be sat in by turns, by all the citizens, a week to each citizen.

As to the side-combs which had presumably been filched from Mrs. Tantruss, though this was stoutly denied by the poetess, the verdict was Mrs. Tantruss should have them back; at the same time, it being suggested by Mr. Podd that Mrs. Tantruss would show a Christian spirit to relinquish her claim.

Dr. Bodger promptly denied that the colony had any jurisdiction in so disposing of his property. He sat on his rights: that is, he sat in his chair; and inquired of Mr. Podd by what means the commonwealth intended to take his chair from him, if he chose not to give it up.

This was a poser for Mr. Podd; for Mr. Podd, down deep in his heart, knew that the commonwealth was now face to face with the question which sooner or later comes to all government: the question being, "Is it right to use Force, to make the individual do what the State policy demands?"

"I'd like to see anybody take the chair," suggested

Dr. Bodger, as if the question wasn't knotty enough for Mr. Podd, without adding anything to it.

The Rev. Joseph Loasby stepped forward briskly, saying, "Well, I'm willing to try, Bodger!" and at the same moment Miss Peebles seized the offending side-combs from her hair, and threw them truculently into Mrs. Tantruss' face. The meeting broke up in disorder, with Mr. Podd rushing frantically about trying to prevent the shedding of pacifist blood.

It was at this juncture that Mr. Waddick observed, to his horror and rage, that Mr. Fink was calmly wearing his (Mr. Waddick's) best waistcoat. Mr. Waddick had, up to the present morning, been wearing this favorite waistcoat, which was a gift from the hand of the beloved Mrs. Waddick, being embroidered with daisies and buttercups, on a purple silk background, by her own wifely fingers. On this particular morning Mr. Waddick had indiscreetly left the waistcoat hanging on a nail in the shelter, unaware of the fact that for days Mr. Fink had been regarding that waistcoat with covetous and admiring eyes.

"Here, you take off my vest, and take it off quick!" shouted Mr. Waddick. Mr. Waddick inclined to call a waistcoat a vest; not only that, but Mr. Waddick, being an unconverted Conservative, had not subscribed to any doctrines of common property whatever.

"It's no more your property than that chair of Bodger's," replied Pete Fink. "As long as you're not wearing it, it's common property."

Whether Mr. Fink really believed any such thing, or whether he simply couldn't resist a waistcoat embroidered with daisies and buttercups on a purple silk, is not important. The important thing is that Mr.

Waddick glared terribly at his opponent; the ends of his mustache fluttered like an aspen; and he began to remove his coat. Mr. Fink, being a man of the world, understood what it means when a gentleman, with whom one has a dispute, begins to remove his coat in this manner. Mr. Fink was not behindhand in preparing for the fray.

"Stand off, Podd!" warned the little grocer of Grape City, seeing the peacemaker approaching. "This is one fight you can't stop. You're a good feller, Podd, but you don't understand. I don't care so much about the waistcoat. If Pickbill had wanted it, I'd have listened to him. But this miserable cuss is at the bottom of our troubles, and if I can't lick him, I'll die trying. He's a human hangnail!"

Podd turned to Willa and cried, helplessly, "What'll I do, Will? This can't go on. This is brutishness."

Willa drew an arm through one of her father's and whispered, "I wouldn't interfere, Bill. Maybe it'll clear the atmosphere, like a thunderstorm."

"Two to one on the grocer!" shouted Captain Rumble. "If you knock his eye out, Waddick, I'll love you like a brother."

"Mr. Loasby, this is disgraceful!" said Miss Peebles to the clergyman. "Two grown men fighting like schoolboys! Still," she added, "if they're going to fight, I hope that disgusting grocer will be soundly thrashed! After all, Mr. Fink *is* an insurgent."

"Give it to him!" cried Freddie Tantruss, dancing around the gladiators with glee.

"*Who* give it to *who?*" inquired David Dostey.

"Oh, it don't make any difference," replied Freddie, without prejudice.

Pete Fink, who was not much taller, though somewhat heavier than Waddick, approached his opponent cautiously, with his fists held in that approved position favored by the Ohio carpenters. Seemingly, Mr. Waddick, who was holding out both hands, with the palms turned outward like a cat facing a mongrel, would have very little chance with the rougher person. But Waddick had not whizzed through life, whizzed through his store, whizzed himself into the Podd party, for nothing. Like a practiced whizzer, Waddick suddenly leaped into the air, and came down like a tiger on Fink, with his hands around Fink's neck. The two men fell together, and for a moment it was difficult to tell which was Fink and which was Waddick. They spun around together, with legs and arms intermingled, like a mop being whirled at the end of a long pole.

"Time!" shouted Captain Rumble, who thought his favorite might get the worst of this centrifugal motion. "Let him up! Let him go, Fink! Get up on your feet like a man!"

"He bit my ear!" cried Fink.

"Don't believe it! You bit it yourself!" cried the captain, without realizing that Fink would have to be even more alert than usual, to perform such an act.

Mr. Waddick, having bewildered Fink with his jumping tactics, now performed a deed which was worthy of the best annals of slugging. Fink expected the grocer to leap into the air again, and braced himself to strike upward. But Waddick, instead, pulled back his right arm and shot his fist like lightning against the jaw of the organizer. It took effect, as the captain remarked, about "twenty East"—and Fink

dropped like a kettle of bread-dough. Captain Rumble rose to his full height, his eyes staring with amazed delight, and counted:

"One, two, seven, ten—*you're out,* Judas!"

Pete Fink did not arise. His eyes were closed, and he had on his face the uneasy smile of a child who is afraid Santa Claus will come down the chimney, and equally afraid Santa will not.

"Well, that's over," said Willa Podd to Mr. Pickbill. "It was really too sudden, don't you think?"

Julius smiled, faintly, and said nothing.

"Why do you suppose, Mr. Pickbill," went on Miss Podd, "that this party has so many quarrels? In spite of all my father tries to do, we just go from one fight to another. And why did Fink take Mr. Waddick's waistcoat? He wouldn't have done that at home?"

"Well, of course I may not be right," replied Pickbill, "but I figure it this way, Miss Podd. I went on a camping trip with a dozen good fellows, once, up in New Hampshire——"

"New Hampshire!" repeated Willa, with a faraway look in her eyes. "Say those words again, Mr. Pickbill."

"New Hampshire," obliged Mr. Pickbill. "Well, we went on this camping trip. The first week we had a wonderful time. We hadn't realized what good friends we were. There wasn't anything we wouldn't do for one another. The second week there was a change, very noticeable. We began to pair off in twos and threes, and suspicions arose. The third week——"

"Yes, what did you do?" interrupted Miss Podd, with anxiety.

"The third week, on Monday morning, we took

down the tents and went back to Dover, and so avoided murder," replied Mr. Pickbill. "Yet they were all good fellows, too," he mused.

"Oh, dear," sighed Willa. "What are we coming to?—But you didn't tell me why Fink took that waistcoat."

"I don't know, Miss Podd. But I do remember that, when you're out camping, you don't feel bound by the ordinary rules. For instance, I remember when we went on this camping trip I just mentioned, on the second day in camp I found a chap using my toothbrush to polish the breech of his shotgun."

XXIII

Deducting eight hours a day for sleep, the Podd party had very nearly sixteen hours daily of leisure—all except Mr. Pickbill, who had not more than ten minutes—and their physical wants were very well taken care of. It was a fine seed-bed for the germination of those notions of art and craftsmanship which Mr. William Morris expounded years ago.

Mr. Podd, being familiar with the thoughts of William Morris, called a meeting of the communistic moot to determine what should be their activities in the arts and crafts. The dissensions of the party had slowed down; there seemed to be a quiet interregnum of agreement; and Mr. Podd felt that it was time to produce beautiful things.

"Of course," said the nozzle manufacturer, "the implements and materials we have at our disposal are meager. But all the more credit to us, to make skillful use of what we have. We have wood, some leather, our knives, our pencils and paper, and a few metals such as were put ashore with us in the form of kettles and ornaments. What would you like to make, Mrs. Tantruss?"

Mrs. Tantruss considered the matter. "Of course," she replied, "I spend a good deal of time thinking—about New Thought and child training; but I should like to be a craftsman also. I think I shall make a pair of sandals, to begin with."

"Excellent!" exclaimed Mr. Podd. "Sandals! Utilitarian, and also beautiful!—and Bodger?"

"Why, I've always thought I'd like to carve in wood," remarked the doctor.

"Of course I shall write verses and essays," offered Miss Peebles.

"I have a novel in mind," admitted Mr. Loasby.

"A novel! Oh, splendid!" said Mr. Podd. "Do you know what you are going to call it yet, Mr. Loasby?"

"Yes," replied Loasby, with some pride. I've got a good name for it. I shall call it 'The Onerous Obligation.' Of course the title doesn't indicate much, till you see the idea developed in the text."

Even Mr. Waddick, the Conservative, admitted that he would probably be better off for some employment other than arenation. He wanted time, however, to consider what his specialty should be.

"As for me," said Mr. Podd, gaily, "I shall try to find on this island some natural pigments, and work them into paints, and having prepared the surface of drift-wood, I want to paint beautiful things. I don't know that I have any talent for it; but at any rate I can find out."

"And I'm going to learn to cook, if Mr. Pickbill will teach me," said Willa Podd.

"Oh, I don't feel capable of that," replied Pickbill, heartily. "But if I can be of any help to you, I'll do it gladly."

Thus fortified, the members of the Podd commonwealth went their ways, and began to work in the arts and crafts. They agreed that, at the end of one week, a meeting would be held, at which each member would announce his or her progress.

At the end of the week, however, it was found necessary to postpone the meeting for a time, because the results did not seem as yet palpable enough to make a showing.

Mrs. Tantruss had not as yet completed the leathern thongs which were to fasten her sandals in front. Dr. Bodger, after a long search for a suitable piece of carving-wood, had cut his finger with his knife, and laid the task away for the time being. Mr. Loasby had made more progress. But he had struck a tough knot in the procession of his novel, as authors sometimes do, and needed more time to consider. His novel, as far as he had gone, was as follows:

THE ONEROUS OBLIGATION

A MODERN NOVEL

By Joseph Loasby

Dedicated to all those insurgent souls who refuse to be crushed by the Weight of Tradition, or Strangled by Doctrine.

Chapter I

It was the afternoon of a dull November day, in the pretty village of Blithedale. A man and woman could be seen walking slowly along the shaded street, he carrying an umbrella and she a vanity-bag, richly inlaid with jewels. I will not at present introduce these people to my reader, as I do not desire to instil prejudice into the mind of him who will keep me company in our journey through these pages. Suffice it to say that there was every indication that the man and woman were wealthy—rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

Suddenly the woman spoke. "It looks like snow," she said. "It reminds me of—"

Mr. Loasby had got no farther at present. "I know

what I wish the woman to say," he explained, but a new thought has come to me. Should not this be the first book of a trilogy?"

"A trilogy! Oh, how wonderful!" exclaimed Miss Peebles.

"Yes, I shall make it a trilogy," decided Mr. Loasby, who needed only this substantiation of his own opinion. So, naturally, I shall have to do more preliminary planning."

Mr. Podd had not yet found any suitable paints on the island.

Mr. Waddick had not yet discovered what craft he was fitted for.

But Willa Podd was learning to cook, and her face had become more than ordinarily joyous, as she discovered that her own hands, under the proper guidance, could produce just as light, delectable biscuits as those of her instructor.

As they were working together one day, Willa asked Mr. Pickbill: "Why is it that our friends haven't yet succeeded in producing anything?"

"Of course I don't know," replied Pickbill, "but I should venture to explain it by saying that they haven't enough time to work. You see, when people have a great deal of leisure, they haven't time enough to do much—not even to enjoy themselves. Not being a philosopher, I can't explain that. But I know that the only men who ever worked in my restaurants who had time for anything, were those who worked hardest and longest."

Miss Peebles had not completed a poem, as yet, but she had jotted down a number of excellent titles, of the Free Verse persuasion. Among them were:

CRYSTALS OF MUD
A LILY SHOUTED AT ME
DOVES WEARING BLINDERS
DIGESTION
I HATE YOUR JULIAN CALENDAR: A WEEK HAS NINE DAYS
O CAPTAIN

The first five poems were at present only existent in title. But the sixth, "O Captain," was so far complete that Miss Peebles had, with reasonable timidity, shown it to Captain Rumble.

Rumble did not like poetry; he suspected it. But he was too gallant a man to refuse to peruse Miss Peebles' effort, when it was obviously courteous to do so. And when the dedication underneath the title caught his eye:

"Dedicated to our stalwart marine leader, Captain A. Rumble," the navigator felt that there might, after all, be something in it worth reading, so he read:

O CAPTAIN

Break on the rocks, you silly sea
You are a plagiarist
For every sea can do that;
You may break ships
But you can't break me.

I am a bird
Undeterred
And I fly to the uttermost
Knowing that My Captain is mighty at the stern.

Noble Captain!
You know why the sea rages;
You know all:
Even why spiders crawl
On rotten wood. . . .

Captain Rumble read this poem thoughtfully. It was the first time he had been mentioned, personally, in a literary work, and though his head was not turned, he felt that in some measure his merits were becoming known. He took the poem to Miss Podd, who read it gravely.

"I wouldn't want you to let Miss Peebles know that I showed this to you," he cautioned Willa. "You know how ladies are, on those things. But I wanted your opinion on one or two points."

"I'll be glad to give it," promised Willa. "I'm not really a good judge of poetry, though. What points were they, Captain?"

"Well, the first thought is, Miss Podd, would you consider it complimentary? You see it says I'm noble —but that reference to spiders—"

"Oh, I should say it was meant to be quite complimentary."

Rumble looked relieved. "There was another thing, Miss Podd. You'll notice that it says 'Knowing that my Captain is mighty at the stern.' Now, of course, I never would be at the stern of my ship, except in an emergency. What do you think she meant by that?"

Willa reassured him. "I think the poem, though I don't pretend to understand it, is highly complimentary."

"Thank you, Miss," said the Captain, touching his cap. "It's really marvelous, the gift some people have of putting words together, isn't it?"

Miss Podd agreed that it was.

XXIV

Master Freddie Tantruss, ever since the arrival of the Podd party on the island, had been "expressing himself," as his mother chose to call it, with great liberality and clearness. Being an observant young person, he very quickly caught the idea that he could annoy the pilgrims without any serious results to himself. His advanced mother stood between him and chastisement; and Master Freddie understood, too, that Mr. Podd was of a pacifist persuasion, and hated the idea of achieving by force what couldn't be gained by precept.

In more recent days, Freddie had practiced his innocent pranks chiefly upon Mr. Pickbill. He had become the bane of the doughnut king's existence. The long-suffering Pickbill, who, like any good cook, did not like to entertain children in his kitchen—even though the kitchen was outdoors—was perpetually aghast at the liberties the boy took. He swept down upon Mr. Pickbill's culinary operations, and bore away such freshly cooked edibles as he could snatch; and, having eaten his fill, used the remainder as missiles, with Pickbill's head as the target.

It was in vain that Pickbill appealed, in his modest way, to Podd. Mr. Podd did not like Freddie's way of expressing himself; but Mr. Podd did not know what could be done about it. He was afraid of the sharp tongue of Mrs. Tantruss; and, besides that, he

felt that there was a stratum of truth in her claim that children had been curbed too much. Finally, however, he asked Albert Neale to interview Mrs. Tantruss and asked her if she couldn't convey the idea to Freddie that his conduct bordered on the unsocial.

Mrs. Tantruss greeted Mr. Neale with her usual argument. *She* had been repressed as a child. It had left a scar upon her soul. Freddie was not going to be scarred thus, if she could help it. Freddie was a living affirmation. It was true, he was sometimes mischievous. What young animals are not mischievous? Did Mr. Neale ever observe how the spirits of children were broken by negations? Did he? Answer her that!

Mr. Neale found it difficult to answer. He had forgotten his own childhood, mostly, and he had not been active in child-training.

"Freddie must express himself. Self-expression we all crave," said Mrs. Tantruss.

"Has it occurred to you, madam," asked Mr. Neale, with more than his usual fervor, "that Freddie may express himself some day so forcibly as to get himself in jail?"

"Pooh!" replied the lecturer on child training. "Your mind runs to jails, Mr. Neale. That is because your spirit was broken, as a child."

So even the redoubtable and competent Neale had to retreat in disorder. But the end of Master Freddie's activities was nearer than anyone thought. And it befell in this manner:

One afternoon Julius Pickbill was giving Willa Podd a lesson in cooking. The stove was a rude affair which Pickbill had constructed ingeniously from stones, cemented with mud mixed with seaweed; and though

this improvised cement soon cracked and fell away from its place, it was not much trouble to replace it when needed. Over this rough oven Mr. Pickbill had fitted a sheet of iron which he had hammered flat from a large kettle. It was an uncouth and clumsy arrangement, but the marvels of cuisine which Pickbill performed on it had kept the Podd party in such good humor as they possessed.

This particular afternoon was an important one for Willa. Up to this time, in spite of her pleadings, Pickbill had evaded the supreme instruction; that of teaching the young woman his specialty, doughnuts. But now she was to learn from the master himself how to manufacture—if the artistry of their production could be expressed by so commercial a word—those pastries for which Pickbill had become famous.

Mr. Pickbill began by putting a kettle on the sheet-iron stove, and filling it two-thirds full of lard, saying, as he ladled in the precious fat: "I don't know what we'll do when this is gone, Miss Podd. This is all the lard we have. We'll have to save every drop."

Having started a good blaze in the stone furnace, Pickbill then began to instruct his pupil in the mysteries of creating the dough. Miss Podd, more interested in cooking than in anything she had attempted during her whole life, watched the master hands with eager and admiring eyes. And while this operation was proceeding, Master Freddie Tantruss, who had sniffed the familiar odor of melting fat from afar, came galloping toward the kitchen to see what could be plundered. As he approached the stove, the boy saw that the time for a raid had not yet come, so he gave a shrill halloo and bounded away again. But as he went, he struck

the heel of his boot against the corner of the sheet-iron top, whereon sat the kettle of lard, and overturned it. Then, realizing the enormity of his crime, he sped away as fast as he could run.

Willa Podd saw what had happened before Pickbill did. She saw a great smudge of smoke arise, without flame, and with thoughts only of the safety of the precious lard, she ran quickly to the fire and tried to rescue the overturned kettle. At that very moment the fat ignited with a roar, and what had been a yellow smudge suddenly became a blast of golden, blue-edged flame. The melted fuel, which had run out upon the ground, suddenly took fire like naphtha. Before the frightened girl could dart back, her skirts were ablaze.

The fatal instinct of a person, when afire, is to run; and with a cry of terror, Willa Podd thought only of the ocean, and of the necessity of throwing herself headlong into it. But before she had gone half a dozen steps, she felt a strong arm around her waist, and a calm, reassuring voice said, "Don't run! Don't move! I'll fix it!"

The next moment she was lifted bodily and laid gently on the ground, and she felt Pickbill's hands deliberately *wringing* the fire from her dress. She knew intuitively that the gentle soul was smothering the fire with his hands, rather than beating it out with them, and she cried:

"Don't be afraid of hurting me!"

"It's out! That was a narrow squeak. I didn't want you to run. It would have fanned the blaze," came at last the quiet words of Pickbill to her ears, and Willa sat up and looked at him. He was gazing at her, confusedly, as though framing some apology for his rude-

ness. "You—you see," the man stammered, "I—you won't mind my taking the liberty—Miss Podd?"

"Liberty?" she echoed. "The liberty of saving me from burning to death, Mr. Pickbill? Don't be absurd!"

"Thanks. Then that's all right," he replied. But he shook his head sadly. "All our lard gone!"

Then, remembering suddenly, Willa looked down at his hands. He was clasping them tightly together, but she saw that the sides and backs of them were blackened and raw.

"You've burned yourself—badly!" cried Willa. "Let me see your hands. We must dress them at once. I'll go for Bodger."

Pickbill looked at her steadily for a moment, and she saw a strange film glide over his eyes. "No!" he said, wearily, his face white with pain, "Don't—do—that. I—"

"Oh, God!" screamed the young woman, and she sprang forward and caught Pickbill's head just as he fainted and fell sidewise toward her.

XXV

With such emollients as he had, Dr. Bodger bound up the burned hands of Julius Pickbill, while the whole party of pilgrims stood around in that awed silence which people always show in the presence of a catastrophe. Dr. Bodger did not take the matter very seriously. He pronounced the burns superficial, though painful, and thought that in a day or two Pickbill would be able to resume his vocation as cook: and the communists strived bravely to suppress their satisfaction at the latter prospect, and think only of their satisfaction that Pickbill was no worse injured: a difficult human feat to perform.

So Pickbill was removed to his cot in the men's shelter, and Willa Podd volunteered to cook for the party as well as she could, at the same time attending to the wants of the injured man.

Dr. Bodger, who with his satisfying diet of nuts, fruits and green leaves, found it difficult to keep awake during the daytime, and quite impossible to awake during the night, having attended to Pickbill to the best of his ability, sought his favorite place of recreation at the foot of a palm, and having thoughtfully munched a handful of nuts, was soon sound asleep with his chin resting on his breast.

The doctor was awakened rudely, just before sundown, by being seized vigorously by the powerful hand of Willa Podd, in the region of his shirt-collar, and hustled to his feet.

"Wha—what's matter?" exclaimed the doctor sleepily. He shook himself testily, and blinked into the face of Miss Podd.

"I don't know what's the matter. That's what I want you to come with me for. Mr. Pickbill is not well, doctor. I'm sure he has a fever. He's talking incoherently."

"Is that all?" replied the doctor, sagging into his seat again. "That's a characteristic of this whole expedition. They all talk incoherently. He'll be all right." The doctor's eyes half closed again.

"Doctor Bodger!" cried Willa, seizing him again and shaking him. "If you don't come along with me, I'll call the whole party. I tell you Mr. Pickbill is very ill. I know it. He needs attention."

"All right, I'll come," said the doctor, and he shuffled along after the young woman, and entered the shelter where Pickbill lay. It would have been obvious to anyone that the injured man was seriously ill. His skin, on hands and face, looked drawn and dry, and though he was unconscious, he murmured indistinct words constantly, and shivered convulsively.

"Well, well!" exclaimed the doctor, "we'll have to see about this." He took a leathern case from his pocket, and extracted a thermometer, and, having unbuttoned the sick man's shirt, placed it under the right armpit. "Has he been long like this?" asked Bodger. "A few burns shouldn't cause so much trouble."

Willa shook her head. After a time Bodger removed the thermometer and went to the doorway with it, squinting at it in the fast-expiring daylight. Then he shook his head. "A hundred and three," he said in a low tone. "I don't see any reason for that."

"Do you think—?" began Willa, and stopped.

Bodger looked at the young woman narrowly. "Oh, I don't think it'll be serious. I'm surprised all you carrion-eaters haven't been sick before. Too much protein food and too little exercise."

"Too little exercise!" Willa burst out, striding toward the doctor with such blazing eyes that Bodger nearly fell backwards in trying to get out of the way. "Do you mean to have the impudence to say that this poor man has had too little exercise, you—you—I don't dare say what you are! While you and the rest of us—I'm just as bad as anybody—have been sitting around talking, don't you realize that Mr. Pickbill has been doing all the work—doing every last thing that has been done—working from sunrise to dark for all of us, and never getting so much as a decent word of thanks! Oh, I'm so ashamed of myself! And you—you miserable loafer—how dare you talk about lack of exercise!"

"Good gracious, don't bawl at me like that," cried the doctor, retreating from what he conceived to be the anger of a tigress. "I didn't mean any harm. Come to think of it—we have been rather rough on Pickbill. Perhaps that's what is—it may be a sort of nervous collapse, brought on by the shock of the burns. Yes, that sometimes happens."

"You—you think that is it?" was the anxious question.

"Yes, I'm sure of it."

"What can we do for him? Why don't you do something?"

"I don't think there's much to do, Miss Podd. He needs to be quiet, and he needs someone to watch him

while he's a bit out of his head. I think he'll pull around in a few days."

"Very well, then!" said the young woman, seizing a cot and dragging it to the door. Get hold here, doctor, and help me throw this stuff out! The rest of the men folks will have to sleep outdoors for the present. Mr. Pickbill will have this shelter to himself. I'll nurse him."

"Oh, good gracious, what an impetuous young woman you are!" objected the doctor. "That isn't at all necessary. It isn't a contagious disease, you know. Pickbill won't be disturbed."

"Indeed he will not!" replied Willa, with tight lips. "Out this stuff goes, every bit of it, except Mr. Pickbill's. Go tell the rest of the men to come and move it out, doctor! Do it now, please! Is *that* the fastest you can move?" The doctor felt himself—not rudely, but forcibly propelled from the shelter, and became brisker in his movement.

"Good God, what a temper that girl has!" he muttered. "Funny how you never notice things in women till some fine day when a simpleton burns his fingers, and they get the nursing mania." And yet, the doctor added, with a shrug of the shoulders, "Egad! I'd like to have her look at me the way she did, just once more. It made me feel—twenty years younger. It would have been more or less of a pleasure if she'd punched my head. And egad! she wasn't far from doing it!"

There were a few demurrers filed by the men of the party at being so precipitately moved out under the stars; not because there was any hardship in sleeping out in the open, but because eviction is never pleasant. But out of doors they went.

"You know, I don't wholly understand my own girl," said Mr. Podd, wonderingly, to Mrs. Tantruss. "I never saw her in this mood before. Usually she found it hard to get up an interest in sick folks. Not callous, you know; but merely too healthy and robust to understand and sympathize. I'm really very glad."

"If it was anybody but Pickbill," replied Mrs. Tantruss, knowingly. "He is such a fool."

"A decent fellow, though," Mr. Podd felt bound to reply. Mrs. Tantruss was about to add some sage remark, but thought better of it.

"Well, folks," announced Miss Podd to the party, "you'll have to manage your cooking some way without me. Mr. Pickbill needs all the care we can give him. I'm going to sit up with him tonight, and some of you can take turns tomorrow. Father, will you see that plenty of fresh water is brought in? And make arrangements to have Dr. Bodger come in once or twice during the night."

"Oh, that won't be necessary—" Bodger hastened to say.

"*Dr. Bodger!*" said Willa, with a peculiar look in her eyes.

"But of course if you think best, I'll be only too glad to do it," added the doctor, quickly. "But someone will have to wake me up."

"Someone had better sit up, and keep a fire going," added Willa. "Is the lantern filled?"

XXVI

During the next ten days following, the Podd communists arenated pokily; they went into a sort of morose lethargy, in which their arts and crafts activities were forgotten, or suspended indefinitely. Mr. Loasby's modern novel—the first of a trilogy—remained at the very point where his heroine had remarked that it looked like snow; and Miss Peeble had not completed "O Captain."

The fact was, the pilgrims were again eating from tin-cans, and imbibing wretched coffee at the hand of Mrs. Tantruss, and they felt jaded and miserable. But they were not contentious. The warlike spirit requires a background of good nourishment. Never expect a half-starved proletariat to revolt: all competent insurgency springs from a well-fed bourgeoisie.

The Podd party, indeed, had relapsed into a state of mutual suspicion, and the only stimulation was that of espionage. Having nothing but leisure, and no very pleasant mischief in view, it became of transcendent importance to each member of the community to *know* what the others were doing, and why they were doing what they were doing, if anything.

Of the whole community only two members were perfectly happy. One was Julius Pickbill, who was unconscious. The other was Willa Podd, who was conscious—of something which had entered her life,

which was greater than anything she had known. She wondered, as she sat for hours beside the cot where Pickbill lay, and held the cup of water to his lips when he moaned and seemed restless, what this new adventure was.

She knew, at least, what it was not. It had nothing in common with that organized philanthropy which had always been represented to her mind as subscribing to Armenian-relief funds, dressing as Danish peasant girls in charity bazaars, or creating drives for the Red Cross. Hundreds of dollars had gone from her purse, in years past, to these noble activities, but not one penny from her heart. She had never given a dollar for the benefit of the Armenian refugees without being acutely conscious, not of the suffering of the Armenians, but of the fact that she had been woefully swindled once by an Armenian rug-peddler. She had never donned a costume in a charity bazaar without feeling, instead of charitable joy, a decided silliness. She had never given a check to any one of the thousand "drives" which swooped down upon Poddsville, without feeling that somehow her pocket had been picked by professionals.

But, day after day, she sat, or dozed, by Pickbill's cot, and wondered why instead of growing fatigued she was always more and more rested and serene in body and mind. The least movement on the part of the man brought her to attention like a wide-awake mother responding to an unuttered appeal of her baby. And this, too, Willa acknowledged: that as the days went on she became more jealous of her position. She had begun by spending only the nights beside Pickbill. Now, she seldom left him.

On his side, Pickbill was mildly entertaining company. It couldn't be said that he raved. He was too modest and quiet a man to rave, even in delirium. He merely issued a running commentary of incoherent facts which, put together, formed an autobiography of his life.

In this manner, Willa Podd learned that the taxes in Dover, New Hampshire, were too high; that a Greek restaurant man had tried to buy out Mr. Pickbill with a check on a bank which didn't exist; that most people put too much vinegar in salad dressing; that a Ford automobile had run up on the sidewalk and through the plate-glass window of Pickbill's restaurant, without damaging the Ford; that Vermont turkeys came from Kansas.

A certain "Nellie" came into the conversation, by degrees; and Willa Podd leaned a little closer. Nellie had an expensive motor-car. Nellie owned a palatial home in Florida. Nellie had told Pickbill that he should want for nothing, if he would only leave Dover and come with her. Nellie finally died and left all her money to the African Methodist Episcopal Church. And it was clear, at least, that Nellie was an aunt of Mr. Pickbill. Strangely enough, Willa felt relieved when this last bit of news was published. And she said, in a low voice, taking the sick man's white hand in hers:

"Poor Pickbill! Just your luck. You *almost* inherited a fortune!"

There was a man named Fred. Fred was such a good fellow. Fred was the best assistant Pickbill had ever had. Pickbill would have trusted Fred with his life. But Fred ran away with all Pickbill's money, it

seemed. Fred was arrested in New York. But Pickbill wouldn't prosecute Fred. Fred had a wife and four children; and besides, Fred had always been such a nice fellow . . . he didn't mean to steal. . . .

"Oh, you dear soul!" exclaimed Willa, with the tears streaming joyously from her eyes, as she leaned over and kissed the unbarbered cheek which was turned toward her.

Pickbill did not resent this familiarity. He prattled on, calmly: "I voted for Bryan in 1896 . . . I heard him speak in Portland . . . such a wonderful voice . . . wouldn't vote for him for town clerk now . . . fine fellow, Roosevelt . . . did mean things, but did them in a big way . . . tried to enlist and go to France . . . said my feet were flat . . . said I was too old . . . here's your change, mister . . . call again!"

At the rate Mr. Pickbill was narrating his life's impressions, he was certain to get down to date before he recovered consciousness. And sure enough, one afternoon he began to talk, in those jerky sentences, about the Podd party. Willa listened intently:

"Mr. Podd . . . good man . . . cart before the horse . . . wants government . . . then . . . fit people to it . . . won't do . . . make people right first . . . then government . . . Rumble honest chap . . . like him . . . Neale all right . . . like him . . . all good people . . . trying to discover themselves . . . weren't spanked enough as children . . . Rumble right about that . . . call again, sir! . . . hope you liked your dinner . . . let's see . . .

got to help them someway . . . they like good cooking . . . teach Miss Podd . . . fine woman . . . cold, cold . . . can't blame her though . . . too much money . . . sweetness in her . . . sees her soul . . . in her eyes . . . thank you, sir! call again!——thirty-five cents! . . . let's see . . . mortgage comes due next month. . . ."

"Tell me more about . . . about *Miss Podd* . . ." urged the young woman, moving closer to the autobiographer on the cot. "You think she's cold? You think she's cynical? But that's all outside, really it is! You do see something besides that in my eyes, don't you? Tell me some more. . . ."

But there was no one to hear. The man was not present. Only the voice went on, and it resumed in a different page of the book and talked pleasantly about a certain swimming-hole up in Conway, when the man was a boy. . . .

It was two o'clock in the afternoon, and they were alone in the shelter, when Willa Podd saw Pickbill open his eyes and look intently at the ceiling for a long time. She knew it had come! Never before had the girl sat with a fever patient, yet her instinct told her that the conscious mind had quietly taken its old place, and dismissed the underconscious thing which had babbled of green fields.

He looked at the ceiling for a long time, and then held up his hands and looked at them. Then he turned his head and looked at her. But at first, evidently, he did not believe his eyes, so he closed them again, and

tried anew. As he still saw Willa Podd, he asked quietly, "Have I been asleep? Is it time to get dinner?"

"No, dear," was the answer. "You're not to get dinner for us. I'm to get dinner for you. Do you feel better?"

Again Pickbill closed his eyes. Then again he opened them. "My mind feels queer, I don't think I heard . . . what you said."

"I said I would get dinner for you, dear. That's all."

A faint smile flitted across the dry lips. "I heard you. You're joking with me. I don't mind. I've been sick, haven't I? I remember—the kettle tipped over—is the lard all gone?"

Willa took the man's hands in hers, and he did not seem to realize it. She looked eagerly into his eyes and asked: "Why do you think I am joking with you? Tell me!"

He stared for a moment, glassily. Then reason took a firmer seat, and he replied honestly. "I just meant, when you called me 'dear'. '

"I am always going to call you that," she said, tenderly. "I'm not cold. I'm not cynical. I'm not anything like that, now. I'm choking with something. I think it's joy. Can you understand? Look at me!" She brought her face nearer his, and they gazed at each other long. And it was then that Pickbill seemed first to realize that she had his hands in hers.

"I don't understand," the man said, faintly. "I think I've died and gone somewhere, but I didn't

know you could take a wooden shack with you—and I'm sure I built this place I'm in." He smiled as he spoke; but it was not the smile of assurance, but rather that of wonder.

"I'm taking an unfair advantage of you, indeed I am," said the young woman, quickly. You don't know what's happened, and I do. You were burned. Remember? And then a fever. Bodger says it was a nervous collapse. You've been unconscious for ten days or more. I've been nursing you. I've been very happy. We're still on this miserable island. There's no other news. Except that Willa has grown to be an old woman—with a little girl's heart. I'm in love."

"In love?" repeated Pickbill, cautiously, not being aware that he had any business to know this.

"Listen, Julius Pickbill," went on the girl, quickly. "I don't want to take any advantage of your condition. But I'm so afraid some of those other people will come in. Do you feel strong enough to hear me talk—just a little."

"I love the sound of your voice," replied Pickbill, simply. "And I feel quite well."

"Well, modern young women are supposed to be strong minded," continued Willa, "so I may as well live up to that reputation. You've been asleep, so there are things you don't know. If I should leave matters as they are, we might go on right to the end of our lives, and never know what was in each other's minds. I—I said a very wicked thing about you, on board the ship. I used you—without your knowledge—your name—in a very impertinent way. I thought Mr. Neale wanted to marry me. I didn't want to hurt

his feelings. I had to think of something quickly; so I said I was going to marry you."

"Me?"

"Yes. That was a silly thing to say, wasn't it? I just named the first person that came into my mind."

"And I was the first person in your mind? Well—I—don't see anything wicked about it. I suppose you have to refuse a great many men, Miss Podd. You can *always* tell them you're going to marry me, if you like."

"Well, wasn't it strange?"

"Wasn't what strange?"

"Well, I mean, wasn't it strange I should mention you; and then, afterwards—well, you see, now, if you cared enough about me, you see, to ask me to marry you, I *would.*"

Mr. Pickbill gazed intently upon the young woman for a moment, and then said: "I don't think I hear things rightly. But if I do, and you said what I think you said, just now—do you mean it? or is it . . .?"

"I mean it."

Julius Pickbill folded the edge of the sheet, very deliberately. Then he said, as though he were settling the whole business permanently: "I'm middle aged—and a failure. You know that. It won't do. I wouldn't even let myself dream about—such things."

"I don't care a snap about your age, or condition," interrupted Willa Podd. "A girl who has enough impudence to propose to a man, as I seem to be doing, shouldn't mind a little thing like age, or condition, and she shouldn't mind what the man says, I suppose,

either. The question is, Julius Pickbill—if you were in your restaurant in Dover, and I should come in and have dinner, and we should get acquainted, and you knew nothing about my father and his millions—would you be interested in me?"

"If you had come into my restaurant in Dover, like that, I should have—I *think* I should——"

"Oh, don't be too honest! In courtship people can exaggerate a little——"

"Well, I should be just as much in love with you as I have been since you spoke to me that first day on board the ship," concluded Julius. "But——"

"I know what you're going to say. You are poor and a failure. I am the daughter of Podd. Is that it?"

"It was something like that," confessed Pickbill.

"You're thinking about what my father would say. Is that it?"

"No, not that. I don't care about that. I don't care what anybody would say. I only care what it would mean to you, Miss Podd. It may be better for you if I always keep your memory in my heart——"

"I think that's the silliest idea I ever heard. Why keep my memory in your heart, when you can have *me?* People do talk a lot of rot, you know, Julius. Let's not you and I maunder and muggle that way. Haven't you something better to say than that?"

"I am not worthy of you," replied Pickbill.

"Yes, you are! You are a thousand times worthier of a woman a thousand times better than I, than any man I ever saw, except my dad. Anyway, let's be engaged. That won't cost anything. And then, if you don't change your mind after we get off this

pestiferous island, we can both do what seems best—to me."

For reply, the sick man took her hands and kissed them tenderly, if somewhat doubtfully. A man who has failed in business a number of times is, even as a lover, prudent against rash conclusions.

XXVII

It was the hard fate of Freddie Tantruss to be tried, convicted and punished, not so much for the injury he had brought upon Mr. Pickbill, but on the strength of his past record.

Indeed Mr. Pickbill saw this, and spoke in his quiet way in behalf of Master Tantruss. "I don't say the boy doesn't need a good spanking," said Julius, "because he does. I never saw a boy who needed it any more. But, really, this looks as though we were punishing him for something he didn't intend to do. Because I don't think for a moment that he meant to tip over the kettle of lard into the fire."

Captain Rumble shook his head with finality. "That's all very well, Pickbill," he cried. "You're a good easy-going fellow, and it's just like you to try to save the lad. But for his own good, and for our own safety, we're going through with this thing. I've seen Mr. Podd, and he just shakes his head and says nothing. That means that he wouldn't interfere to stop it. Waddick wants the boy whaled with a stick. But I'm for spanking. That's old fashioned; it's been found the best way, and provided the spanker has got strength and persistence, it's never been known to fail."

"But who's going to do the spanking?" asked Pickbill.

"Waddick," replied Captain Rumble. "First they thought of me. I'm willing enough. But, after all,

my hands were meant to deal with men, and I might injure the young devil. Waddick's the man. He's quick and accurate. When he gets through with Freddie, Freddie will know he's been initiated."

Mr. Pickbill looked soberly out upon the blue waters for a moment, and then shrugged his shoulders. "When is the boy going to be punished?"

"Just before dinner," answered Rumble, frotting his hands expectantly.

"Well, maybe it's for the best. But it doesn't seem quite fair. It reminds me of a murder trial back home, when I was on the jury. There was a young fellow named Charlie Tucker, who was being tried for the murder of a spinster lady. The evidence was all circumstantial; really, there wasn't much to convict him on. But Tucker had been a wild, good-for-nothing youth. He had been a common nuisance in the neighborhood for years. He'd been guilty of a good deal of deviltry of one kind or another, for which he hadn't been punished. So we jurymen got together and talked it over, and decided that though this particular murder wasn't his, perhaps it would be a public benefit to hang him. So we hanged him. I've never felt quite sure we did the right thing. But we were sworn in to do our duty as we saw it, and we did.—Are they going to have a regular trial for Freddie?"

"I suppose so," replied the captain. "Mr. Podd says it's got to be done in due form. He says it mustn't appear like a mob attack. But it won't take long to reach a verdict on that young rascal."

Mrs. Tantruss, a little too late, saw Freddie's approaching doom, and made an eleventh-hour effort to save her child. She threw herself upon her knees be-

fore Mr. Podd, burst into tears and implored him to intercede with the other pilgrims. She even went so far as to acknowledge that Freddie had possibly been unsocial in expressing himself, and that she would guarantee that he should make an apology to all concerned.

Mr. Podd assisted the lady to her feet and said:

"Mrs. Tantruss, it has gone out of my hands. Personally I do not believe in punishment. I believe the time will come when we shall do without all these horrid forms of trying to hammer goodness and the spirit of brotherhood into mankind. But in this case I can't do anything. Whatever I may believe, I don't think it right that I should try to control the rest of the party. They are not so advanced in their beliefs as I am. I see that clearly. They cling to certain old ideas. I'm sorry to say that one of their deep-rooted fallacies, which they seem not to overcome, is that spanking is good for children. I must confess, that my own daughter Willa seems to share that notion. So—I'm afraid it's no use."

"I dare them to lay hands upon my boy!" shrieked Mrs. Tantruss, suddenly becoming belligerent. "Just let them try it!"

"If I were you, Mrs. Tantruss," suggested Mr. Podd, conditionally, "I wouldn't make an important issue of this thing. To tell you the truth, there seems to be a powerful opinion among the pilgrims that you should be spanked, yourself, instead of, or in addition to, Freddie."

Mrs. Tantruss stared at the manufacturer incredulously and then began to laugh hysterically. "Spank me!" she yelled. "They wouldn't dare! They would-

n't—oh!" The lecturer on child training abruptly sat down on the ground and began to kick her feet wildly and gasp chockingly as though she were in convulsions.

"Now, my good woman—" began Mr. Podd, looking around for help.

The only reply to this was that Mrs. Tantruss rolled over and began to kick more wildly and scream at the top of her ample voice. The pilgrims came running from all directions.

"Good God, what's the matter now?" cried Waddick.

"I think she's in a fit," panted Mr. Podd, with ashen face. "I was just telling her that some of you think she should be spanked instead of Freddie—"

"Oh, is that all?" cried Captain Rumble. "I've seen a good deal of those fits, mostly barmaids in seaports, when they discovered some sailor had given 'em counterfeit money." He removed his cap and held it toward Mr. Waddick. "Here, Waddick!" he ordered. "You're nimbler than I am! Run down to the ocean and get this hatful of water. We'll bring her to!"

Mr. Waddick, seeing what was intended, ran like a schoolboy, and brought back a capful of brine without losing a drop. Mrs. Tantruss kicked convulsively, and moaned. Her eyes were closed and her teeth set tightly.

"It wouldn't be right for a gentleman to do this," remarked the Captain, thoughtfully. "Miss Podd, would you mind baptising the lady?"

"Will it hurt her, Captain?" asked Willa, hesitating.

"It'll save her life," replied Rumble.

Miss Podd thereupon poured the whole capful of water into the upturned face of the lecturer. At the same time Rumble roared, dramatically, "Get a *barrel*

of water, somebody. We've got to bring her out of this!"

But the barrel was not needed. Captain Rumble had thought as much. As the salt water ran down her neck and into her nose, Mrs. Tantruss gave a choking snort and sat up, looking wild and indignant. Then, crying, "You brutes!" she leaped to her feet with an agility astonishing for a woman of her dimensions, and ran briskly toward the camp.

"I never knew it to fail," chuckled Rumble. "I've seen it bring 'em to their senses when doctors had given 'em up. Only you must dose 'em liberal."

Mrs. Tantruss was not present at the trial of Freddie. Mr. Podd—rather half-heartedly, it was thought by some—asked the pilgrims to leave Master Tantruss to moral suasion. The pilgrims stoutly refused. Freddie was speedily found guilty of being a common nuisance and sentenced to receive a spanking at the hands of Henry P. Waddick. . . .

A little before noon, a whimpering small boy crept furtively into the woman's shelter, where his mother lay sobbing upon her bed. He sat down sullenly upon the ground, and then jumped up again quickly and rubbed the seat of his small knickerbockers. "Ouch!" he cried.

Freddie waited for some expression of condolence from his mother. But there was none. Only, now and then, a half-stifled sob. It annoyed the young man. It annoyed him more and more, both the silence and the sobbing. Finally he cried, passionately:

"Well, what are *you* crying about, ma? It was *me* that got spanked, wasn't it?"

Mrs. Tantruss lifted her head and regarded her son

with reddened eyes. "Oh, Freddie, you've hurt your mother so much!"

Freddie stared. "Hurt *you?*" he shouted. "Well, what did old Waddick do to *me?* Say, that old geezer's got a hand like a plank-walk!"

"You've shamed your mother—before the world," replied Mrs. Tantruss, bitterly. What will people say? A lecturer on the training of children—and to have her son spanked in public! Oh, I'm so humiliated! And after all my years of training—to be humiliated like this!"

Mrs. Tantruss suddenly sat bolt upright. The woe in her eyes gave way to indignation. Impulsively she rose, seized her young son, and shook him till his teeth chattered in his head.

When Freddie recovered his breath, he picked himself up sadly and wailed. There was no answer. He wailed again, louder. There was still no reply. Then, after a pause, Freddie began to laugh.

"Gee!" he said, contemplatively, "the old lady was mad clean through!"

XXVIII

One evening, after the last tropical shadows had settled down over his island world, Mr. Podd was sitting alone, on the beach, under the strewn stars. He was thinking of the frailty of human nature, and the indelible errors which are imprinted upon the mind of man by early teachings. Now and again his thoughts shifted to Poddsville. At this time, in Winter, the night shift would be coming on; the factory windows would be throwing forth a thousand yellow lights. Probably there was a foot of snow on the ground; pure white on the surrounding hillsides; slushy black and wheel-rutted around the factory yards. He could almost hear the slapping of loose beltings on their pulleys, and the whistling hum of the dynamos. And here he was . . . on a nameless island in the South Atlantic . . . with a party of pilgrims. . . .

Mr. Podd became aware of another presence near him. It was Willa. She stood a moment, delicately, hesitating whether to intrude upon her father's thoughts. Finally, she asked, "May I sit and think with you, Bill?"

"Please do, Will." Podd stirred mechanically as though to make room, forgetting that they had a square mile to share.

"I'll be very quiet, and I won't interrupt your dreams," said the girl, sitting snugly and fumbling for her father's hand.

"I think I want to be interrupted now," replied Mr. Podd. "I was beginning to be lonely. It's all so vast, and so silent. Sometimes it frightens me, Will. It's like the grave of the world, that big sky up there."

"All planted with daisies, like ours at home," added Willa, solemnly. "I know. But it doesn't frighten me. It soothes me, in a way."

"You're not fifty-two years old," was the answer.

They sat silently for a long time, hand in hand. The girl leaned her head on the man's shoulder. He put his arm around her. It was just so, remembered Podd, that he had sat with her mother, years ago, on a bench in a public park of Newton, Kansas, with a Gettysburg cannon pointing at their heads in senile jest. At that time, he recalled, he had two hundred dollars in the world, and was wondering how much furniture it would buy.

Willa was not thinking of furniture. That was an item which would take care of itself. But curiously enough she was thinking of a home—and not the Poddsville home of her father. She said, abruptly:

"Bill, I'm thinking of getting married."

Mr. Podd turned, as much as the head on his shoulder would permit. She felt his breath come more quickly. She loved him more for that.

"No, Will," he replied; not as a negation, but as a question.

"Yes, Bill," said Willa.

There was a very long pause. Somebody laughed loudly, up at the men's shelter. And the water rippled musically at their feet.

"You've just made up your mind?" asked Podd at last.

"Just a few days ago."

"You know how I feel about it," said Podd, speaking very fast now. "I couldn't bear to think of your not being married. I don't like that sort of thing. But I don't relish the idea of your going away from me and leaving me alone with—with the plant. I've been weak about that, Willa. I've even wondered if—if there'd be a corner for me—wherever you go—but pshaw! I know how it is. That sort of thing doesn't work. The one thing I dreaded when I married your mother was our folks wanting to come to live with us. I mustn't forget that."

"Sometimes I've thought of marrying a Duke," said Willa, "and living in a palace. I understand that all palaces nowadays have leaky roofs; but I dare say we could afford to make them tight, couldn't we? I've no doubt I could marry a Duke, if we set snares enough, don't you think?"

"You're not serious, now."

"Not exactly. No. But I have thought of the nobility, a little. But they're expensive, and not very satisfactory. So, then I thought of a business man. I mean a great business man. I mean a giant of modern business. But I think I prefer a Duke to one of those. You see, Bill, Dukes have a little time for affection and home life, if you catch them young. But a woman who marries a giant of finance is a widow before she gets home from church. Besides, there's nothing distinctive about being a millionaire in the United States, any more. You can't go into the big hotels without stepping on dozens of them. Now, it would be some fun to be able to introduce my husband the Duke. In Europe, it wouldn't mean anything, of

course. They're fed up on dukes. But in Missouri or Illinois it would mean a great deal. Because we're a democratic country."

Mr. Podd winced and said nothing.

"Well, I've eliminated the nobility, and I've eliminated the giants of finance. That narrows the field down to oddments—one thing or another. That brings me down to some man I could really care for, because he's worth caring for, and would care for me because I am me—because I am I—which is it?—and—"

"For goodness sake, don't keep me in suspense, Will!" implored Podd, suddenly. "Are you really serious—or is this all in fun?"

"I'm serious, Bill," was the reply. "I'm going to marry Mr. Pickbill. At least I'm going to marry him if we ever get away from this island—and I dare say we shall some day. There, that's the whole story. Don't ask me if I really mean it. That wouldn't be—well, it wouldn't be nice towards Julius."

Thus warned in advance not to show surprise, Mr. Podd concealed his amazement as well as he could. He almost blubbered the words:

"You've really made up your mind, Willa? You're not asking—my advice."

"Oh, I want your advice—yes, of course. That is, unless you disagree with me too violently. Naturally I couldn't take any advice unless it agreed with my plans."

"Are you cynical, Will? Some things you say sound—I don't know just how to put it—as though you had lived a hundred years."

"I've lived a thousand years, father. All women have. Even little girls, just going to school. I'm

just the opposite of cynical. I'm happy, and childish, this moment. And I'm waiting—"

"I wouldn't say a word that would—that could possibly—keep you from living your own life," said Podd dully.

"But—" suggested Willa.

Podd laughed a soft and ghostly laugh. "Yes, there is a *but,* of course. I know you want to hear what I really think. We've always been pretty frank, little girl, haven't we? And always shall. So here goes."

"Oh, I wish I didn't know what you were going to say," sighed Willa.

"Of course, if you do, it isn't any use my saying anything, Will," replied Mr. Podd, with just a tinge of friendly vexation.

"Forgive me, Bill. That was stupid of me. Tell me what you really think. I'll be very quiet."

Mr. Podd meditated for several moments. Then he began: "Well, I have to go back of the present a little, Willa. I wouldn't be a stupid old father if I hadn't considered this—this event—a good many times. I've never been quite able to imagine the man I wanted you to marry when you got married. But—not to hurt your feelings—I'm sure it wasn't a man like Mr. Pickbill. Not that I don't see fine qualities in Mr. Pickbill! I do. He has a kind heart, and a sweetness and simplicity—and—all that."

"That's a good deal, dad."

"Yes, I know it is. And yet, I wanted—I dreamed—how shall I say it?—you see the Podds were good people, and your mother came from good people, and yet both families are a kind of ordinary people. The Podds came to America in 1656, and the highest any

of them got was when one was made a captain in the revolutionary army. That's not against them, you understand. And yet I suppose we all like fame, of one sort or another. It's a weakness. But we're full of weaknesses. I've made a good many millions of dollars, Willa, but that isn't exactly it, either. You're right when you say it's no longer distinctive to be a millionaire. I came too late. Now, if I had been the *first* millionaire, or the *only* millionaire—do you see what I mean?"

"Yes, I see. You wanted me to marry a man who had done something great."

"No, not that exactly, either. Because I happen to know that great men are frightfully poor husbands. They're too great to have any time to be nice to such a wonderful little girl as mine. No; I've thought that the best kind of man—provided you loved him—was one who came from a family of important men—of title——"

"Great heavens, you haven't been thinking about the nobility, too? Not Dukes?" gasped Willa.

"God help me, I confess it," replied Mr. Podd.

"O-o-o-oh!" squealed Willa. "How silly I was when I presumed to know what you were going to say! And I thought all the time you wanted me to marry some man who began life as an office-boy, and rose to be the greatest manufacturer of glass bottles! Bill, I've wronged you! And you were thinking about Dukes all the time! Splendid!" She patted her father's hand with energy and delight. "But I thought you wanted to abolish all caste feeling and classes and titles!"

"I do! I do!" cried Mr. Podd, stoutly. "I do!

I'm ashamed of myself! It's my weakness, Willa. We're all weak. We all have some vulnerable spot. I've tried to beat this notion out of my head, every time it came there. But—it's bigger than I am. It's because I love you so much, maybe. Because you seem so wonderful to me—so precious—that I can't bear to think of giving you into the arms of any man alive—so I've dreamed of giving you to a whole great ancestry of some man. Some noble lord who comes of a family which got their title in the days when titles meant something! None of your continental titles. But one of those real titles in England——"

"Really, dad, I must say——"

"Yes, I know. It's absurd. Podd, the man who believes in the equality of man! And I do! Believe it or not, Willa, I'm ready to die for my principles! But my sweet little girl is—oh, confound it—I give it up. Perhaps I'm only a hypocrite, after all!"

"Not a bit of it, dad. That's one thing you are not. I've thought many of those same things. And also, I've tried so hard to believe in abolishing social castes, too. And when you think too hard about it, it makes your head spin. Fortunately I don't have to think about it any more. I'm in love. I'm head over heels in love with Julius Pickbill. So our principles are safe, dad. We can go right ahead and abolish class feeling."

"It wouldn't occur to you ever to mention what I've just told you?" asked Mr. Podd. "It sounds so foolish."

"Mum's the word. Never a whisper from me, Bill."

"At least you couldn't think of being married till we get away from this island, could you?"

"Of course not. I despise church weddings, but I wouldn't be without one of them. After all, if a woman finds she's made a mistake, after she's married, it's something to be able to look back on a good, solid, expensive church wedding. Isn't it, now?"

"I suppose so," replied Podd; but his mind was elsewhere. After a few moments, they both rose, as by a single impulse, and embraced tenderly. Willa rubbed her chin reflectively along her father's face. "You've no idea what a satisfactory father you are, Bill," she said, with a joyous laugh. "It's a real pleasure to weep on your shoulder. Good night, dear."

"Good night, little girl," replied Mr. Podd, and they both went straight to their shelters. But as soon as William Podd arrived in the men's shelter, he seized Albert Neale by the shoulder and whispered, "I've got to have a talk with you, Neale! Very important."

Mr. Neale, who had just composed himself for slumber, responded to the call. He shuffled on his clothes and went out with his employer to the beach. When they were well out of earshot of the camp, Podd turned to his secretary and said, with a trembling voice:

"This is confidential, Neale. Willa's thinking of marrying Pickbill. Good God, man, don't stand there blinking at me! I'm excited! What are we going to do about it?"

"I take it you don't favor it?" asked Mr. Neale.

"Well—anything to make her happy, Neale—not a word or an act to hurt her—but—Good Lord, man! *Pickbill!*"

"Quite so. I feel that way about it," replied Neale.

"I've given you a number of difficult jobs to do,

since we've been together, but nothing so hard as this one," went on Mr. Podd. "You see, Willa is well, I wouldn't say headstrong—not quite that—but she has an acute sense of self-reliance. We mustn't seem in any way to order her life. After all she has a right to choose her own path. But—I thought—if we could possibly make Pickbill see that the alliance might not be best for her—put it that way—best for *her*—and if there was anything we could do for him——"

"I get the idea. Buy him off," assented Neale.

"Heavens, no!" cried Mr. Podd, in alarm. "Don't be so abrupt, and matter of fact, Neale. Remember, this is not a matter of business. Besides, if I judge this man Pickbill correctly, he's not that sort at all. He's a decent, clean-spirited man. I like the fellow. Come to think of it, he has shown us all a few things about—well, about brotherhood and good-will. But, if he should see that marrying Willa might not be good for *her*——"

"Exactly," said Neale, promptly.

Mr. Podd sighed. "I have a distinct feeling, Neale," he said, "that you are not going to succeed. But when I turn it over to you, I have done all that I can."

"I'll see Mr. Pickbill in the morning," clucked the secretary. "Leave it to me, Mr. Podd. I already have an idea."

"I trust it's a good one," returned Podd. "Good night."

Julius Pickbill was greatly surprised, next morning, when Albert Neale approached him after breakfast and suggested that they might derive great benefit by walking down the beach together. Up to this moment Mr. Neale's outward attitude toward Mr. Pickbill, since the

beginning of the voyage, had been one of complete indifference, except at meal time. Mr. Pickbill on his side had regarded Neale with a feeling akin to awe.

They strolled down the beach for half a mile, Mr. Neale showing an interest in sea-shells and plant life which amounted almost to garrulity. Mr. Pickbill waited for the real object of the stroll to be divulged, for he could not fail to perceive that he was not being led away from the camp to investigate zoölogical specimens.

Finally Neale stopped and took the other man's sleeve gently. "Mr. Pickbill," he said, with warmth and salesmanlike energy, "Mr. Podd and I have been talking you over. We regard this stay on the island as being only a temporary embarrassment. Of course we don't know exactly when we shall leave for home, but we feel sure we must be taken off in the near future."

"Do you?" asked Pickbill.

"Yes. And we've been talking about your future. You know possibly that Mr. Podd has a way of doing something for people who interest him. He admires the way you go about your work without complaint and with willingness and promptness; and he sees that you are a born chef; yes, sir, a born chef. You have a talent for cooking."

Pickbill was delighted, and showed it.

"Now," Neale went on, "you've heard about the great Podd plants, and the welfare work we are engaged in. One of Mr. Podd's ideas is that workmen cannot be at their productive topnotch unless they have proper food. So we have a great restaurant in connection with each factory. We aim to run this as a

self-supporting institution. But if necessary we are quite willing to take a loss on it. We need a man who can take charge of all our restaurants. It's a big job. This man would have to engage the cooks, see that the food was proper and good, teach the cooks new wrinkles,—in short, he'd be a mighty important man in our organization. For this type of man we'd expect to pay well. I don't know precisely how much, but we certainly would start him at ten thousand dollars a year——"

"Ten thousand dollars a year!" echoed Pickbill, opening his eyes wide. "For a cook!"

"Oh, but he'd be much more than a cook! He'd have absolute control of our restaurants. He'd be one of the greatest restaurant managers in the world. I believe, Pickbill, you are the man we need. What do you say?"

Julius Pickbill was stunned. He stared at the secretary blankly. He couldn't believe his ears. Before the eyes of the Dover man floated the long line of defunct restaurants he had owned; floated the sheaves of bills he had gazed helplessly upon at night, wondering how he could pay them; the mortgages that had harassed him; the pennies he had had to count, twice and thrice—the grindstone upon which his large nose had been firmly held by Life.

And now he was being offered ten thousand dollars a year, at the least! Not only that. He was being offered something which dazzled him as money could never do—the chance to run a restaurant as he had dreamed in his wildest day-dreams—one where he did not have to sniggle and skimp; liberal portions, plenty

of butter for frying, freshly laundered napkins at each meal; the chance to make diners happy.

"Do—do you really mean it?" he gasped.

"You can be sure I mean anything I say," drilled out Neale, briskly. "I never make offers I can't back up. I believe you are the man for us. I believe you would find with us the place you deserve.—There is just one small reservation I ought to mention. When I mention this, please understand that I am speaking from my own point of view—not Mr. Podd's. I—er—I have heard—I don't wish to intrude in your personal affairs—I've heard that it is possible that you and Miss Willa Podd——"

"I beg you won't mention that," said Pickbill, hastily, in confusion.

"No, I didn't intend to mention it. As I say, I don't wish to intrude in your private affairs. But I did want to remark that we have found, in our business experience, that whenever a man married into the family of the owner of a great business, and takes a position in the business, trouble always begins. I can't tell you why that is. You'll pardon me for mentioning it, won't you? To speak frankly, a son-in-law ought never to think of becoming part of the business organization of his wife's father. It is a disrupting influence. It usually ends in unhappiness."

Mr. Pickbill was silent.

"Understand, Pickbill," concluded the secretary, taking the other man's hand and shaking it warmly, "there are no strings to my offer. The job is yours when you want it. As I said, Mr. Podd likes you. I think I may go so far as to say that he has no objec-

tion—to you—socially—if you know what I mean. I drop you a kindly hint, that's all."

After saying this, Mr. Neale walked quickly back in the direction of the camp, leaving Mr. Pickbill dazed.

Julius Pickbill went about his work, the rest of that day, in a kind of mechanical stupor. He was thinking hard. But if Mr. Neale had known the precise tenor of Pickbill's thoughts, the secretary would have been surprised. For Pickbill was not thinking of the ten thousand dollars a year. Mr. Pickbill had never possessed ten thousand dollars, at one time, in his whole existence. He regarded ten thousand dollars as a desirable but fantastic sum of money, which did not greatly concern him. The chance to be the greatest restaurant manager in the world concerned him more. But not so much as Neale would have supposed. The idea pleased him immeasurably for a few moments, and then passed into the limbo of remote hopes. Pickbill was thinking of one word which Neale had casually spoken. It was the word "socially." He had suddenly seen, through that word, a bottomless chasm yawning before his eyes. He—a Dover keeper of small restaurants—and she, the daughter of Podd——

Pickbill shuddered, and made up his mind on the instant. He looked up from his dishes just as Willa Podd looked at him, from the group where she was sitting, with her winning smile. Pickbill felt that he could bear it no longer. He saw himself, on the instant, as a pygmy, aspiring to don the clothes of a giant. He felt ridiculous.

And then he saw Willa coming toward him, smiling. He was terrified. He felt like taking flight. But the island was small. He heard her saying softly, "Shall

we take a little walk, dear?" and his head nodded, rather than his will. They went slowly down the only promenade of the Podd Commonwealth—the smooth, ripple-marked beach.

Willa began, gaily, "I saw you and Mr. Neale walking together this morning, Julius."

"Yes," choked Pickbill.

"Very likely he suggested to you that it would be better if you didn't marry me?"

Pickbill's knees trembled. She knew it! Everybody knew all about everything except himself. Where did people learn to learn so much?

"Yes, I see, Neale said something to that effect," went on Willa, laughing. "I hope the silly old goop didn't have the impudence to offer you a job in the plant, as compensation—or something of that sort?"

Pickbill took a long breath. "Miss Podd,—Willa —" he said, in a frightened tone, "I'll tell you just what he said. He said your father wanted me to be a manager of all the Podd restaurants, at ten thousand dollars a year."

"Good!" cried Willa. "Only the salary isn't too generous. However, it will do to begin with."

"But I've been thinking that—well, I've had a good deal of experience as a restaurant-man, but I never had any experience as—as a husband—and perhaps we ought to do those things we know best—you see——"

"Look at me, Julius Pickbill!" said Willa Podd, severely. "Did that man dare to propose that you take this job instead of me?"

"Why it wasn't exactly that. But——"

The young woman burst into a merry laugh. "Oh, such silly people!" she cried. "Just like men—just

like men. They think in terms of *either* and *or. Either* you can do this, *or* you can do that. Always some ridiculous alternative. Why do men's minds run that way? Why, Julius Pickbill, I'm really ashamed of you. I can forgive my father and Neale for thinking *either* and *or,* but you ought to be free from that. *You're* not a success. Hasn't it occurred to you that it needn't be *either* and *or?* That it can be *both?* Why not have *me* and the *job?*"

"But, socially——" persisted Pickbill.

"I see!" nodded Willa. "Neale was bound to bring that up. Look here, Julius, wasn't there somebody in your family who ever did something, held some office, committed some extraordinary crime, got into the newspapers or something like that? Think hard, now! Wasn't there?"

Pickbill reflected. Then he shook his head. "There's been nobody since General Pickbill, who was in the Revolutionary War," he replied.

Willa Podd seized the man's hand and whirled him around toward her. "Do you mean it? A general? A full general? Can you prove it?"

"Oh, yes, he was a well-known general. But I don't see what that has to do with me."

"It hasn't. But it has. A full general! And the best the Podds can boast of is a measly captain! It's all right, dear! The social disability is overcome. Oh, if you'd only told me this before!"

That night Mr. Podd and Albert Neale sat and smoked and talked together, in subdued tones.

"You've failed—dismally," Mr. Podd said to his secretary, but without rancor. "I don't suppose anybody could have succeeded. Willa guessed it all, and—

well, they're to be married if we ever get back to Poddville. Now that it's all decided, I don't know that I mind. Pickbill hasn't made much of a success in business, but Willa tells me he comes from a very fine family. . . . of course you've heard of the great Revolutionary hero, General Pickbill . . .?"

XXIX

Miss Peebles had not yet completed her free-verse poem, "O Captain." But the subject of her alyric had, since reading the stimulating lines, undergone a notable change in demeanor. The Captain no longer issued forth those stentorian tones of old. To be sure, he could still be heard without difficulty. But something like a softness and mellifluence had come into his voice; and a touch of abstraction into his manner. He was seen to walk a good deal alone, shaking his great head and making gestures with his hands. Waddick feared for the captain's mental integrity. But the truth of the matter was highly complimentary to Captain Rumble. He had become enslaved by the Muses, first, and more immediately, by that bobbed propagandist for the Muses, Miss Pansy Peebles. They were seen together. They were seen less often with the rest of the pilgrims. Finally the Captain and Miss Peebles made no shame of deliberately going arm in arm down the beach, she reciting her verses to him.

On the morning of the twenty-seventh of April—another memorable day for the Podd pilgrims—Captain Rumble sought Mr. Podd and awkwardly and bashfully asked that gentleman's confidential ear. Mr. Podd, who had lately retreated farther into himself, smiled wanly and went aside with the captain.

"It's like this, Mr. Podd," began Rumble. "I'm a man of few words, and damned little experience among

the petticoats. That's to the credit of a sailorman, I take it. It was all right as long as my mother was living. I took care of the old lady in good shape, though it ought to be said by someone else, perhaps. Never a time did I draw my pay at a consul's office, that I didn't send most of it back to Bristol, to mother. Well, she's gone—rest her sweet soul. And the years aren't making astern. And a man gets damnably lonely. What do you think of Miss Peebles?"

Mr. Podd was surprised. He took a renewed interest in life on the moment. "Why, I think she's a most excellent lady, Captain," replied the manufacturer.

"Do you think she'd be content to steam slow?" was the next question.

"I don't know that I quite understand."

"Well, I mean, I'm not so young as I was. Not as a man, and not as a captain. The merchant marine isn't what it was. They make navigators by mail nowadays. The point is, I'm an eight-knot chap, and I've got sense enough to know it. Not an ocean greyhound. Some women might not be satisfied."

Mr. Podd's private opinion was, that Miss Peebles would be satisfied with less than some women; but he did not make his opinion public. He only said:

"May I ask if you are engaged, or only thinking of being, Captain?"

The captain scratched his head, after tilting his cap on one side.

"Well, that's a question. I don't know whether we're engaged. You see, a man says things carelessly, and they're took seriously. Speaking as man to man, I don't think I'm committed. Speaking as before a jury,

maybe I've stuck my foot in it. Not that I don't admire the little lady, you understand. A great head, Mr. Podd! Rather a marvel. I suppose you can take it, we're engaged. It's very flattering, to an unlearned duffer like me. She's known all the great literary lights—in New York City."

"I congratulate you," said Mr. Podd, simply, extending a hand.

"Wait a minute. There's one hitch. That's what I wanted to see you about. Do you remember when I was in your office in Poddsville, I told you I signed myself just "A. Rumble," and didn't fancy giving out my whole name?"

"I remember very well," answered Mr. Podd. "I've always been curious about it."

"The name was an idea of father's," went on Rumble. "Mother never liked it. But father was a well-read man—never did much but read, the last forty years of his life, beginning when he was twenty. It was a name I wouldn't give to a child, not even if I was sure he was swore onto me. It has followed me all through life, like a Lascar with a knife. I vowed I'd never tell it to a soul. But—Miss Peebles says she must know. She says she couldn't think of venturing into immortal friendship—those being her words—with a man who was called 'A,' or just 'Captain' Rumble. I'm asking you—"

"You'll have to tell her," was the prompt advice. "You owe it to the lady. Or, if you care to tell *me,* I'll tell *her,*" offered Mr. Podd.

The captain's eyes glistened with gratitude. "Now, that's what I was coming at. Coming from a third

party it wouldn't make me so ridiculous. If you'd be that good—just tell Miss Peebles my name is—my given name is—"

The captain hesitated. His face turned that strange purple which the rush of blood into his cheeks, in anger or excitement, always caused. His half-shaven state, and his tousled hair gave him the appearance of a ferocious buccaneer. He breathed the name almost in a whisper:

"Apollo."

Then he added, "Go ahead. Laugh your head off!"

Mr. Podd did not laugh. He nodded gravely, and was about to say, on the contrary, that he thought it an excellent name, when he was interrupted by a shrill cry from Mrs. Tantruss, who was making her best speed toward them.

"Mr. Podd! Mr. Podd!" cried the lady, "She's gone!"

"Who's gone? Calm yourself, Mrs. Tantruss! Be calm, if you please! What has happened?"

"That woman—that woman!" cried Mrs. Tantruss, arriving in a state bordering on collapse, "gone away from the island!"

"What woman?" insisted Mr. Podd.

"The Frale woman!"

Mr. Podd looked at Captain Rumble and shook his head. Then he turned to Mrs. Tantruss and said, in great resignation, as though he scented another disturbance in the Commonwealth, "Tell me about it."

Mrs. Tantruss put back the shower of hair which had fallen over her right ear, and went on pantingly, "You know I am not the kind to spy on anyone, Mr. Podd.

I was merely out walking, on her side of the island. I think it's only humane we should sometimes look over that way to see if she is safe. Goodness knows I've no desire to interfere with her—"

"Yes, yes, I understand," interjected Mr. Podd, with some impatience.

"I was just standing at the edge of the woods, looking in the direction of her shelter. I saw that the shelter was tipped over. There was nobody to be seen. She's gone!"

"The shelter tipped over?" gasped Mr. Podd, with real interest. "Are you sure?"

"I ran down to the shelter, and the sand all around was covered with footprints. And there were banana-skins. Banana skins! Banana-skins all around!"

"Well, what if there were banana-skins?" growled Captain Rumble?

"What if there were banana-skins!" echoed Mrs. Tantruss. "Do you realize, Captain Rumble, that there are *no bananas on this island?*"

Rumble's eyes opened wide. He seized Mr. Podd by the arm. "By the Lord Harry, Podd!" cried the captain, "she's right! If there were banana-skins on the spot, somebody's been here and took the poor girl away!—Indians from the mainland, I'm afraid! The poor little girl!"

"Indians my grandmother!" snorted Mrs. Tantruss. "Indians don't wear boots, and they don't read newspapers—like this."

Mrs. Tantruss had been holding the important evidence behind her. She drew forth a torn section of a newspaper and pointed in triumph to the headline

upon it. Mr. Podd and Captain Rumble stared with the eyes of muddled unbelief:

"LOS ANGELES TIMES."

"Good Heavens!" cried Mr. Podd, when he could speak. Then, suddenly, he leaped forward, crying, "We're saved! There's been a boat! Get the party together, Captain, and follow me!"

Never since their landing upon the island, had the pilgrims shown such activity. In less than ten minutes all were upon the scene where, until now, the lonely, exiled Miss Lucretia Frale had spent her hermitage. All talked at once.

"The shelter-hut was pushed over deliberately by a man! I see his footprints."

"Here's a lunch-box."

"Oh, why weren't we here?"

"Has she left a note?"

"Will they come back for us, Mr. Podd?"

"Neale," commanded Mr. Podd, "take all the evidence and note it carefully! Tell the people not to walk around on these footprints. And do keep them quiet, if you can!"

The very spot was found where a boat had been pulled up on the sand. Captain Rumble viewed the evidence and pronounced his opinion that it was a motor-launch, with a sharp prow and narrow beam. There were still little oily spots on the water—the sea having been unusually calm for several days.

Albert Neale's eyes noted everything worth recording. But, sadly, the pilgrims confessed that the evidence was only too cruel. Miss Frale was gone. The boat, from wherever it had come, was likewise gone.

Not a speck appeared on the calm blue of the sea, as far as their straining eyes could reach. They stared at the horizon line until giddiness caused them to reel. Miss Peebles burst into tears, and was comforted by the captain. The Rev. Joseph Loasby became quarrelsome, and tried to pick a bone with Henry Waddick. Even the serene Willa Podd came to Mr. Pickbill with trembling lips and silently put one of her hands in his, and tried vainly to smile.

They huddled together on that strip of beach, like people who have been tumbled out of their homes by fire or earthquake, and seek the consolation of one another's presence in a public square.

"I'm afraid—they've gone," choked out Mr. Podd, finally. "I—I think Miss Frale—felt that we hadn't treated her—just right—and she didn't tell them that we were on the other side of the island. Perhaps—it's simple justice."

There was a long silence. Then Miss Peebles asked, in a bitter tone, "Who was it, Mr. Podd, who insisted on driving her out of our party? *I* was certainly not that person."

"Yes, that's right, come to think of it!" said Mr. Waddick. "It was Mrs. Tantruss! That was a smart trick! She's gone and dished us! We'd be on our way home, now!"

All eyes were turned upon the unfortunate lecturer. Mrs. Tantruss began to weep hysterically. Even Mr. Podd felt obliged to say, "It was very unfortunate you took that position, Mrs. Tantruss."

"Perhaps we all ought to share the blame," suggested Julius Pickbill, soothingly. "I don't remember

that any of us fought very hard to keep Miss Frale with us."

But the pilgrims were not to be soothed. The more they thought of it, the more enormous the crime of Mrs. Tantruss appeared. They had been on the very edge of rescue, and Mrs. Tantruss had deliberately frustrated their chances. Vague mutterings began to circulate. Homesick, bored, revolting against their imprisonment, the pilgrims were insensibly becoming a revengeful mob. Perhaps it was not the kind of mob which would wreak any physical wrong upon its object. But it was clearly the kind of mob which would hector its victim into destruction, if it went ahead at the present rate.

Freddie Tantruss, fresh from the greatest negation of his life at the hands of Henry Waddick, gave a shrill, instinctive yell of fear, and ran to his mother's side.

"Leave her alone, can't you?" the boy cried sobbingly. "Can't you see my mother's crying?"

There was a hush. The muttering ceased, and all the pilgrims fell into a hopeless stupor, and stared vacantly at the place where the Frale homestead had been.

All, except David Dostey. Young Mr. Dostey had not joined in the outcry against Mrs. Tantruss. He had been spending the precious moments in shying banana-skins at the head of Dr. Bodger, and indulging in other diversions. Now David suddenly asked, pointing out to sea, and speaking without emotion:

"That's a boat, ain't it?"

The Podd pilgrims looked. And with a single impulse they set up a lusty cheer, and ran down into the

ocean, where they stood, heedless of the fact they were knee deep in the surf.

A snow-white yacht, sail-rigged, but with a motor auxiliary which sent puffs of gray smoke from the stern, was making straight for the Podd Commonwealth.

XXX

The white yacht was the *Charlie,* owned by Stunning Pictures, Incorporated, of Los Angeles, California, out on "location" work in the South Atlantic, in charge of the world-famous film director, Mr. Hubert Roxthorne. The *Charlie* had been skirting the coast of the Guianas and Northern Brazil for a month past, working on a stupendous film to be known as "Harpies of the Deep."

Quite casually, the yacht had seen the little island on which the Podd Pilgrims had been marooned, had sent a boat ashore to look for local color, and had been surprised to find the lonely Miss Frale, a beautiful girlish barefoot picture, in the act of washing her *lingerie* at the beach.

Mr. Hubert Roxthorne, the great director, was an ardent temperament. With that resourcefulness and trigger-quick perception which had made him the only million-dollar-a-year director of the films, he knew, as he stood at the bow of the launch, and gazed upon this forlorn little figure, that his whole voyage was to pay unusual dividends.

Miss Frale had looked up incredulously at the oncoming boat. She saw Roxthorne in the bow, and behind him the camera-man with his camera mounted ready on a tripod. Lucretia's face perfectly imaged the wonder and half-terror she felt. It was as though she were gazing upon a mirage.

"Camera!" shouted Roxthorne.

"Aye, aye, sir," responded the camera-man, who, being also a temperament, employed nautical language at sea, and terrestrial speech ashore.

"Hold it, young woman!" commanded Roxthorne, shouting at Miss Frale. The camera began to grind. Miss Frale held her pose for a minute, and then turned and ran gracefully up the beach toward her shelter. It was a perfect strip of film. No star could have done it better.

Roxthorne nimbly leaped ashore and pursued his prize. For she was his prize. He knew it from the moment she had looked up from her lingerie. For several years, Hubert Roxthorne had dreamed of such a film as was never flashed upon the silver-sheet, a "monster" production to be called, with classic simplicity, "EVE"—the story of the expulsion of the two great human ancestors from the Garden of Eden.

Roxthorne had found the Adam, a youth named O'Connell. But three years of patient search had failed to produce the ideal Eve—a young woman with the requisite look of perfect innocence. There were thousands of young women candidates who looked almost innocent enough. But, scrutinized under that amazing eye of the great Roxthorne, they had all revealed some fatal touch of sophistication—of guilty knowledge. And now, for the first time, he looked into the face of one whose face portrayed, beautiful as it was—almost nothing at all.

"Your name, my little girl?" asked Roxthorne.

She told him.

"Miss Frale," replied the director, "my card. You've heard of me? I knew you existed somewhere. I knew

that fate would bring us together. Your fortune is made—and mine. Now, tell me how you came here."

Lucretia Frale hesitated. She looked over her shoulder in the direction where she knew the Podd Commonwealth lay. There arose in her heart a spirit of revenge, as she recalled the taunts of Mrs. Tantruss, her own exile, and the bitter and lonely nights she had spent apart from the rest of the pilgrims.

Then Miss Frale replied, solemnly, "My father and I came here looking for gold which was buried by pirates hundreds of years ago. Our little ship was wrecked in a storm, when I came to consciousness I was lying on this beach. It seems years ago. I——I forget a good deal of what has happened since." She drew a hand across her brow wearily.

"Poor girl!" exclaimed Roxthorne. "You've had a terrible experience. But it's all right now!" He went on thoughtfully, "Perhaps you and your father had a map which indicates where that pirate gold was buried?"

"Father had the map in his pocket," responded Miss Frale, brightly. "Poor dear father!"

"That's too bad. It would have made a wonderful film picture of real life—our digging up that pirate treasure. Well, I suppose you are ready to leave your little island now!—— Put her luggage in the boat, George!"

A few minutes afterward, Miss Frale was installed in a comfortable cabin on board the *Charlie*. But she was not at peace. She went on deck and stood for a long time silently, looking back at the little island. She began to remember that Mr. Podd had, after all, been gentle and kindly with her; that Willa Podd had

urged her to remain with the rest of the party, despite the opposition of Mrs. Tantruss and she recalled the big, friendly nose and engaging eyes of Julius Pickbill, who had, many a day, brought his doughnuts and biscuits over to her little camp, and proffered them with a cheery word of encouragement. After all, it was only Mrs. Tantruss who had been actively hostile. And she was punishing them all to avenge herself on one woman. The tears came into Miss Frale's eyes.

Someone touched her arm lightly. It was Mr. Roxthorne. "We're leaving your island behind forever," he remarked lightly.

"Oh, Mr. Roxthorne!" cried the girl, suddenly, "I was lying! It wasn't so, about my father and the pirate's gold. Please stop the ship and go back to the island. I came there with Mr. Podd, the great nozzle manufacturer, and a whole party of people. There was a mutiny and we were all put ashore—and they are on the island now. We mustn't go away and leave them!"

"Mr. Podd!" cried Roxthorne, "You don't mean the great William Podd—the socialist and radical and what-you-may-call-'em! Not *the* Podd! You're joking!"

"No, I'm telling the truth, now! Please believe me! Turn back and see if it isn't so!"

Mr. Hubert Roxthorne looked narrowly at his fair discovery. "I don't know now whether you're more gifted as an actress or a scenario writer," he said with a laugh. "But I'll turn back if you say so."

And now, just as Miss Frale had looked up in bewilderment from her laundry, on her side of the island, and was thrilled by the powerful figure of Roxthorne

in the bow of the launch, so the Podd Pilgrims stood, half-unbelieving, when the launch returned to the island.

Again Roxthorne saw his opportunity—though of another kind. He saw the little group of communists, some of them even mechanically reaching out their hands toward him, and he knew that this, too, was an unexpected picture.

"Hold it, all of you!" he cried, and almost in the same breath barked out the word, "Camera!"

The film in the bow of the launch began to grind again. "Now then, some of you on your knees, in thankfulness!" shouted the director to the Podd party. "Never mind if you do get wet! You, you lady with the boy in knickerbockers! Snatch him to your bosom, please! Remember, you are saved, saved! Here you!" went on Roxthorne, addressing David Dostey, "you don't look as though you were being saved! This is no Sennett Comedy! Straighten out your face."

"He isn't quite responsible," explained Mr. Pickbill to the director, touching his forehead, significantly.

"Oh, I see. All right, get him out of the group. We can use him later in another reel. Now, then, all back up the beach, and come running down with faces of astonishment! You can't believe your eyes! Rescue-ship has come! See! A little faster, there, my good man!"

This last remark was to Doctor Bodger. The doctor was about to reply angrily. But he recalled that this was indeed a rescue-ship—and he feared the consequences of a display of ingratitude. So he hopped as nimbly as possible, and came rushing back down to the water's edge, at the signal, with such abandon that

he fell face down in the water, thus spoiling several feet of film. The scene had to be done over again.

Finally, Roxthorne was satisfied. Then he said to Mr. Podd: "The young lady, Miss Frale, has told me everything. I'll be very glad to give you all passage to Key West, Florida, if you're willing to bunk on deck, as we haven't rooms enough for all of you."

"I'll sleep in the rigging if you'll only get me away from here, mister," promised Henry Waddick.

"Good! I'll land you safe and sound in the United States. But I think you owe it to me—though I'll pay you all well for it—to help me make a good film of this adventure of yours. Of course, as I see it now, it hasn't quite the necessary jazz. We need a menace. Now, I've got some extra-people on board who can make up as Indians, and attack your party. We'll get out all the guns, and plenty of powder, and have a real battle. And then we can burn down your shelters, at the finish."

Mr. Podd was silent for a moment. Then he said quietly, "I'm sure we all thank you, and we'll do what we can to help you out. But, if you don't mind, I'd rather pay you well for taking us to the United States, without making this film. You see, I am Mr. Podd, of the Podd Nozzle Company—no doubt you have heard of me. Money is no object, in a case like this——"

"For God's sake, Podd," whispered Waddick, pulling at the manufacturer's sleeve, wildly, "don't cross him! I'll let his damned Indians scalp me, or pose as Venus, or anything—if they'll only get us off this place."

"Just a moment, please, Mr. Waddick!" said Mr. Podd. "Let me attend to this."

The manufacturer took Roxthorne confidently by

the sleeve, and led him aside. They talked earnestly for several minutes during which conversation both men gesticulated liberally. Finally they came back to the rest of the party, and Roxthorne announced, with a shrug of the shoulders, "Well, let's be getting away. We won't bother with filming this scene. But," he added, with something of a sigh, "It would have been a knockout in the picture world, if you could have seen your way clear to let us do it, Mr. Podd!"

The snow-white yacht *Charlie* ploughed her serene way northwestward toward the Florida peninsula.

Every day, the Podd pilgrims gathered on the forward part of the boat, and gazed wistfully toward home. Each new bit of land which was sighted was a new cup of Tantalus to their lips. They talked of nothing but home—what the people in their home places were doing, at this hour; and they pestered the navigator with continuous questions as to the speed of the boat, and the length of the voyage yet to run.

But the morning came when a blue haze on the horizon gradually resolved itself into a gray bank with a white streak at the foot of it. Roxthorne made his way to the little group of pilgrims and pointed dramatically.

"The Florida Keys!" he exclaimed. "The United States!"

With one accord, the pilgrims pulled off their hats and gave three rousing cheers for their country.

That is, all the pilgrims cheered except the Rev. Joseph Loasby. It was a matter of principle with Loasby not to cheer for any political unit smaller than the Universe.

XXXI

THE waxing sun flowed warmly in through the windows of Mr. Podd's private office in the Poddsville plant. The geraniums in the window-boxes, which had been budded when Mr. Podd sailed away, had borne their blooms, and were sending forth new clusters of buds. Just outside, on a telephone wire, a raspberry-throated linnet, after scratching his left ear reflectively, cocked his eye toward the man inside the room, and began a trill of welcome home. In point of fact, the welcome was somewhat tardy. Mr. Podd had been back in Poddsville for two weeks. But presumably the linnet had just had the matter called to his attention.

Mr. Podd felt strangely at peace, within himself. He rose from his desk, went to the window, and breathed a deep draught of the vernal air. For a long time he remained looking out upon the fresh green of the elm trees along the street. He had much in his mind's eye. At last, he went slowly back to his desk and pressed the pearl button which summoned Neale.

It was the same brisk, ready Neale who closed the door quietly behind him, and took a seat opposite the manufacturer. With Neale, the island was already a faint memory. His work was behindhand. And there was the matter of the desirable absorption of the steel-barrel company. . . .

But Mr. Podd was not in the mood for business—

at least of that order. "Is there any news, this morning—of our friends?" he asked.

"No, sir. That is, not much. A letter came from Miss Peebles, asking if you would lend her five thousand dollars to start a magazine of poetry. But I assumed——"

"Yes, that's right. Impossible," replied Mr. Podd. "Still, you might send her a check for a hundred, with my compliments. She has married Captain Rumble, hasn't she?"

"Yes. She says the captain isn't going back to sea. He wants to become an actor in the motion pictures."

Mr. Podd smiled. "Nothing else?"

"Well, there was something else. I don't like to have you bothered with it. The Rev. Mr. Loasby says he won't leave Poddsville until he sees you personally. He's becoming quite annoying. Spoke rather insultingly to me this morning, when I told him flatly you would not finance his proposed Church of The Rebellion. Wants a hundred thousand dollars! I like his nerve!"

Mr. Podd blushed faintly. He waved his hand. "Be patient with him, Neale," said the manufacturer. "Let him stay around till his money gives out, and then buy him a ticket for some place like Vancouver, or San Diego. Some place as far away as possible. Mrs. Tantruss and her boy have gone back home, haven't they?"

"Yes, I got rid of them at last. I gave her three hundred dollars, and said that would positively be all we could do. She scorned the money at first, but I handed it to her again, and the second time she kept it. And I've found Dostey a job in the shipping room.

Our test showed that he could run an automatic nailing machine faster than anyone else there."

"Have we heard from Waddick? Something scathing, I suppose?"

"Well, now there's the queerest thing, Mr. Podd. I was forgetting that. You said you didn't want to be bothered with these details just yet, so I was keeping them back. We did have a letter from Waddick, and I was surprised at the tone of it. He wrote thanking you for your many kindnesses to him, wanted to be forgiven for any little hasty words, and wished you a long life and happiness."

"Well, well," said Mr. Podd. He folded his hands and contemplated the desk-blotter. "Any news from——"

The door opened softly and the face of Willa Podd looked in. "Hello!" she cried. "Am I interrupting?"

Podd sprang to his feet and leaped for the door. He seized his daughter by the hands, drew her into the room, held her out at arm's length for a sweeping glance of inspection, and then took her in his arms.

"I think that'll be all just now," said Mr. Podd to the secretary, meaningly. Albert Neale shook hands cordially with Willa, and withdrew.

"Well, well," beamed Mr. Podd. "You've just got back? Where's Julius?"

"Oh, he's still down at the station, fussing about the ocean of trunks we brought back with us, I suppose. Train just got in."

"And you're happy? Very happy?" asked the father.

"More than that. More than more than more than.

Look, Bill! I've discovered something! About Julius!"

"What is it?" asked Mr. Podd, quickly.

"Why, it's a real discovery. Nobody seems to have thought of it before. It came over me suddenly yesterday morning, just as we were getting ready to go from the hotel to the train. Julius isn't a failure! Why, he's a success! He said he was a failure, and other people said he was a failure; and he was wrong, and they were wrong. He just failed at one particular thing. But—just think! What is a success, Bill? Just stop to think of it. Isn't a man a success when he does his part of the work of the world so cheerfully, and uncomplainingly and willingly, that everybody is better off for his *being?* Just stop to think what we'd have done, on that island, if it hadn't been for Julius. Doesn't it make you shudder, Bill? And isn't it true that if you had a millon people like Mr. Pickbill you could have any sort of social state you want, and everybody would be happy?"

Mr. Podd did not reply directly. "He's a mighty fine fellow. I'm satisfied as to that," he answered. "You'll have everything sent up home, won't you, little girl? You'll not be thinking of building a house for yourselves just yet?"

"I'm going straight to *my* home—my father's house," replied Willa.

Mr. Podd rubbed his hands delightedly. "That's my Willa!" he said.

"And the morning papers are full of it!" exclaimed Willa, "Of course you've seen all about it!"

"No. All about what?"

"All about our ship, *The Future*.—You haven't?

Oh, why didn't I bring that Indianapolis newspaper we bought in the dining car? Julius has it in his pocket, I think."

"Tell me about it. What was it?" cried Mr. Podd eagerly. "The Poddsville paper didn't have a word of it. Tell me!"

"Why, let me see. How did it go? Oh, yes, *The Future* has just arrived at St. Vincent, in the Cape Verde Islands, being towed by a tramp steamer—I've forgotten the name. They were all out of fuel, and had been drifting around for days. Everybody was in irons except the officers. The sailors had been holding meetings every day, and every time they finished a meeting, there was a new leader on board, and the course of the ship was changed. Potchkin only lasted two days as leader, after they left us on the Island. Finally there were so many deposed leaders in irons that the first officer figured his chance had come. He and the other officers took some iron bars and hit the rest of the soviet over the heads with them, and clapped them all down below. I think that's what the paper said. So the poor dear old *Future* just mooned around the ocean, after that, without any oil to burn, until the tramp steamer came along. Isn't that lovely?"

"Well, well!" exclaimed Mr. Podd.

After Willa had gone, Mr. Podd fidgeted a bit, and then rang once more for Neale.

"Albert," began the nozzle manufacturer, "Will you please take down a few memorandum notes, and build them up into statements for me? Are you ready? *First.* 'Mr. Podd to the newspapers: Mr. Podd announces that although the voyage which he undertook in the interest of the International Commonwealth and

the Brotherhood of Mankind has resulted, owing to unforeseen circumstances, in what might be taken to be a failure, wishes to impress upon the newspaper and their readers that he is not at all deterred from his purpose.

"'Mr. Podd regrets to state that, owing to the haste with which his party quit the island off Brazil, it was necessary to leave behind the entire edition of his well-known book. But a new edition, carefully re-edited in the light of his recent experiences, will soon be on the press, and will, Mr. Podd believes, present an absolutely irrefutable argument in favor of the Communistic Commonwealth, as a just, benevolent and ideal form of government'."

After a pause, Mr. Podd continued:

"Make twenty copies, Neale. And please inform any newspaper men who call that I have nothing further to say."

THE END